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THE SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

THE SACRIFICE FOR SIN

As Revealed in the Law and the Gospel.

WITH A

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF CERTAIN MODERN VIEWS.

BY

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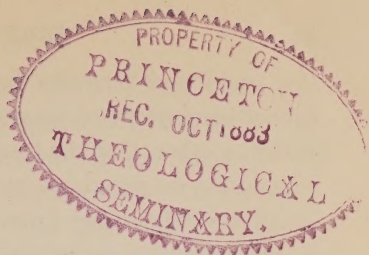
"THE PERISHING SOUL;" "ANCIENT LANDMARKS;" ETC.

Ὡ τῆς γλυκείας ἀνταλλαγῆς, ὡ τῆς ἀνεξιχνιάστου δημιουργίας.
Epist. ad Diognet.

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PREFACE.

THIS volume assumes that the Bible presents to us a faithful and intelligible view of the Divine mind in regard to 'Sacrifice for sin,' whether as that mind was revealed to Israel through Moses, or to the world at large by our Lord and His apostles. And from this it proceeds to consider the demand for the arrangement as that appears in Scripture, as well as the distinct character of the arrangement itself. We are thus, of course, led to examine the relation in which man as a transgressor stands to God as his Lawgiver, and what bearing upon that relation the sacrifice of Christ was designed to have. Thus we come at once on the two vital questions, What penalty, if any, has been attached by the divine Governor to sin?—and what has the Saviour's death done for its removal? The first of these questions we find answered in the word 'Death'—taking that in the Scriptural sense of 'cutting off' or 'blotting out' from among the living. The second of them finds its answer in the multiplied views, statements, or references which we can sum up only in the expressions, 'instead of' or 'Substitution.' It is from

the conviction that the latter of those vital truths cannot be properly represented, except in its connection with the other, that the book has sprung. Nor does it depend for its soundness upon anything else than the soundness of these two principles. Various other points in the argument are to the writer's mind of the very highest importance, but these alone are regarded by him as essential. Satisfaction to divine justice is, indeed, so far as he can see, the one adequate *rationale*, whether of *punishment* or of *atonement*. Still that is only a *view*, an *explanation*, a *theological principle*. The other he holds to be an actual *revelation*—nothing more and nothing less. Hence the book professes to be essentially an *exposition* of Scripture statements—according to the genuine sense of the language in which these are conveyed, as well as their entire connection, whether among themselves or with collateral circumstances. Such exposition leads of course to *argument*, when it finds itself in collision with contrary views on the same points. And so, as may be gathered from the title-page, that comes to form a considerable portion of the work. All thus depends upon the accuracy with which the statements of the divine revelation are explained, and the conclusiveness of the answers given to the opposing views. This, I am aware, will seem humble work to many, and fitter for the schools of men than for the kingdom of God. It may be said that such 'elaborate expositions of Scripture seem rather to darken than to dispel the darkness.' I may even be sneered at for having succeeded in gaining here and there a 'logical

victory.' I may be told that 'a little child would better understand Plato than such (as I) St. Paul.' Be it so, I know no way of arriving at the mind of God about redemption, except through His Word; and I know no way of learning from that Word, except by devoutly and soberly endeavouring to ascertain what it means, according to the principles of that human speech in which it has pleased the divine Author to convey it to us. Nor do I either hope or wish to obtain any higher thoughts of God or humanity—from any discoveries, assumptions, or intuitions whatsoever—than are supplied to us by the divine Word as it now stands, and as taken in the natural sense of its own language and teachings. Thus taken, I find about it a majesty, simplicity, and, not least, a harmony, which seem to come home to one's whole soul as the incontestable seals of truth. On the other hand, I ask whether—in those interpretations which, to say no more, are less natural, and yet claim so much of superior enlightenment—there be not a very serious evil, however little suspected, lurking underneath? Has there not, somehow or other (I cannot tell, I only ask, for it seems so like it)—has there not got into the minds of men, otherwise truthful and honourable, an idea or feeling that, in the interest of some foregone conclusion, 'the end sanctifies the means'? The imputation would of course be vehemently resisted; but does it not seem after all, as if it practically came to this—that any misuse of certain words—any catching at certain sentences or sounds—any incoherence between certain conclusions

and their premises—any bending to theory of materials however obstinate—any contempt of objections however weighty—any amount of assertion that one thing means another—might be allowed in the handling of Scripture, when the end is to establish some principle which is esteemed more sacred than Scripture itself, being assumed as of necessity the very mind of God ?

As for the mode of treatment pursued, the object is first to present a somewhat full view of the Scripture facts and statements in regard to ‘Death,’ as that which underlies the provision of ‘Life’ made for us in Christ. After this follows an enquiry into the principle on which these facts depend, as well as into the question how far the ‘death’ which sin brings is removable by repentance. The next four chapters (vi.–ix.) are occupied with the subject of sacrifice and atonement in the Old Testament. Before proceeding further, it seems well to present a connected view of the sentiments of the chief writers who have laboured so hard of late to overturn the ordinary belief in the Saviour’s ‘Substitution.’ After this the New Testament is gone through in detail, for the sake of examining accurately its information on the subject. Then after another discussion of principles (ch. xvii.) there follows a series of chapters (xviii.–xxii.) in which the most important of the views objected to are examined, in direct connection with the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles ;—this being followed by a view of what we may regard as expressed by the title—THE SON OF MAN. And then the ‘Conclusion’ pleads with those who reject what has been advanced throughout—

urging it upon them that it is no 'opinion,' 'doctrine,' 'plan,' or 'system' that is contended for; but the very authority of God, and the very Redemption of Christ—the one calling for the soul's absolute submission, and the other presenting for its unconditional acceptance the grandest gift ever heard of in the universe. It is no mere truth at all, in short, that we are so anxious about—but the entire relation to man—of Him who is "THE TRUTH" under the character of "The Lamb of God." Our whole concern is—How has God revealed Himself?—and what does He ask us to receive from Him? The one question means nothing less than—what God is to man; and the other—what we have in that Blessed One in regard to whom it is said, "HE THAT HATH THE SON HATH LIFE."

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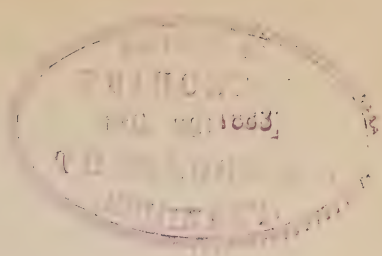
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BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL: . . . WHO FORGIVETH ALL THINE INIQUITIES; WHO HEALETH ALL THY DISEASES; WHO REDEEMETH THY LIFE FROM DESTRUCTION."

PSALM ciii.



THE SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

CHAPTER I.

DESTRUCTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

OPEN the page of Divine revelation—say, at present, that portion called the Old Testament—and there is one fact which stares you in the face, as prominent at least as any other that can be named. It is the fact of *Destruction*, in connection with man. The first chapter of the Bible announces how, after the creation of other things, God made man in His own image, and pronounced him very good. The second chapter displays the happy creature settled as the friend of God, in a very pleasant garden in a land of delights. Meanwhile, disobedience has sprung up, and in the very next chapter comes the announcement—“Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” And thus already destruction has commenced—not, of course, as excluding the renewal of being in some other state, if there shall turn up sufficient evidence for that—but certainly as in the most distinct manner involving the cessation of it in the state to which the announcement refers.

Thus begins the history of man upon this earth. And how does it proceed? Precisely as the commence-

ment would lead us to anticipate. Man increases, and his wickedness too; till, at last, a God of merey is constrained to say—"I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth;" and so "every living substance was destroyed, and Noah only remained, and they that were with him in the ark." In due time the flood ceases; the smoke of burnt-offering ascends; and the bow in the cloud is given as a pledge that "the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

But, though such a security against this special calamity is thus graciously vouchsafed, it does not follow that the work of destruction, even in its most awful form, is henceforth to cease. For what could be more awful than when "the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from heaven, and overthrew all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities"? Or, when He destroyed Egypt's first-born in their homes, and Pharaoh's horsemen in the sea?—while even God's own Israel is secured from Egypt's ruin, not because of any betterness in themselves, but only through the sprinkled blood of the Paschal-offering. Remember here the fearful threat on the occasion of the golden calf, "Let me alone that I may consume them"—with the actual destruction, by the zealous Levites of the three thousand in the same day—and this as followed by the unmitigated announcement—"Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book;"—all in solemn harmony with the wider announcement of the law, "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed." (Exod. xxii. 20.) With this combine the wilderness consumption of the entire mass,

six hundred thousand adult men, of those who had refused to march into Canaan—of whom the apostle writes, “They were destroyed of the destroyer;” and of whom Moses sadly sings, “Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men.” After this we are not surprised to find that under the bites of the fiery serpents “much people of Israel died;” and that of the wretched followers of Baalpeor “there fell on one day three and twenty thousand;” while, as regards the destruction of Aaron’s sons, it seems but a trifle in comparison, and that of Korah and his associates not much more. After this, can we greatly wonder at the announcement, “I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven”? And, whether wondering or not at the instrumentality employed, we certainly cannot be surprised at the edict itself which required Israel utterly to destroy the doomed nations of Canaan. For, startling as was such a requirement, it was less so by a great deal than the Divine threatening against Israel itself—“The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke in all that thou settest thine hand to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with drought, and with blasting, and mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder, and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and pursue thee till thou be destroyed. Therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and thirst, and

nakedness, and in want of all things; and He shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck; until He have destroyed thee. And it shall come to pass that, as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you." Yes, let us mark it well—the process might be tedious and terrible, and it might even be, as we know it was, the Divine design all along, to preserve the nation from actual extinction—yet notwithstanding was it one, at least, of the Divine purposes, and one as clearly announced, and as certainly fulfilled, as any other of the whole—to "destroy them and to bring them to nought." For such was to be, and to a fearful extent became, the nation's fate; just as when in the same prophecy the threat went out against the secure and presumptuous sensualist, "The Lord will not spare him; but then the anger of the Lord and His jealousy shall smoke against that man; and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven." (Deut. xxviii. 20, 22, 24, 45, 48, 63; xxix. 20.) Or, to sum up the whole as we have it in the last charge of the Hebrew lawgiver, "See, I have this day set before thee life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce unto you this day that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land whither thou goest to possess it. I call heaven

and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou, and thy seed, may live; that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him; for He is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them." (Deut. xxx. 15-20.)

And, in one word, if we would understand that lesson of destruction which God was in those days teaching His people, we shall find it not only in such details of His doings or designs, but in the very character which He was pleased to assume—"The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." (Deut. iv. 24.) And if the thought should for a moment seek admission into our mind, 'Oh, but that can only mean His loving opposition to evil for the creature's good;' then every thing in the context where the word is spoken (say the first nine chapters of the book) will rebuke our levity, and oblige us to believe, if anything can, that nothing less is intended than the utter destruction (whatever that may signify) of the individuals or companies denounced.

Or, turning from Moses to the prophets, what do we find about destruction? Let a few specimens from the chief of these suffice.

"Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." (Isaiah i. 9.) "The destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." (i. 28.) "And the strong shall be as tow,

and his work as a spark; and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them." (i. 31.) "Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against His people, and His hand hath smitten them, and their carcases were torn in the midst of the streets." (v. 25.) "Behold the day of the Lord cometh (it is the burden of Babylon), cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." (xiii. 9.) "And I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts." (xiv. 23.)

Then passing over the many dark pages that intervene—"My sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. . . . The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea." (xxxiv. 5, 6.)

And once more, we find in lxiii. 1-6 such language as this—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? . . . I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

And then the compassionate Jeremiah—"The carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven,

and for the beasts of the earth, and none shall fray them away." (vii. 33.) "Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter." (xii. 3.) "I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them." (xiii. 14.) "Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the Lord; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and to destroy." (xv. 1-3, *cf.* xvi. 3, 4.) "So will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury." (xix. 11.) "I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; and they shall die of a great pestilence." (xxi. 5, 6.) "Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence." (xxi. 8, 9.) "A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord.

And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth." (xxv. 31, 33.)

Or, turning to the next of the prophets—so different in mind and style, and yet so entirely the same here—what do we find again, but just one long message of death and life, destruction and redemption? The burden of the whole being—that the wicked, whether warned or not, shall die; the watchman at the same time reaping the fruit of his own conduct, faithful or unfaithful. (Ezekiel iii.) "A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted, and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them." (v. 12, 13, *cf.* xxi. 17.)

Then comes the man with the ink-horn, and the commission to his fellows—"Go ye after him through the city and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old men and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man on whom is the mark;"—the slaughter being so terrible that the prophet falls upon his face, crying, "Ah, Lord God! wilt Thou destroy all the residue of Israel, in Thy pouring out of Thy fury upon Jerusalem?" (ix. 5, 6, 8.) "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son, nor daughter; they shall but deliver

their own souls by their righteousness. For thus saith the Lord God; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast!" (xiv. 20, 21.)

Chap. xviii. may be regarded as a discourse upon the text, "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

Again, "The house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them. I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands; because they despised my judgments and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. Nevertheless, mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness." (xx. 13-17.)

Of the Ammonites and others we read, "I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries; I will destroy thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." (xxv. 7.) "I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword." (13.) "I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea-coast." (16.) To all which it may suffice to add that unparalleled destruction

of Israel's enemies so mysteriously pictured towards the end of the book. (xxxix.)

To quote from the other prophets in the same way would be at once tedious and superfluous. Just take, as a specimen of them, Daniel's vision of the four beasts (vii.), with all the destruction, past or future, there pictured; and Zechariah's view of Israel—first as rejecting their Shepherd (xi. 9, 16, 17), and then at the period when “in all the land two parts should be cut off and die.” (xiii. 8.) And if more be wanted, let it be the closing words of the entire book—“Behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Mal. iv. 1–3.)

Thus do God's prophets announce destruction. And if to such intimations it be needful to add any instance of execution, let it be the case of the proud Assyrians, when “the angel of the Lord went forth and smote in their camp one hundred and eighty-five thousand,—and when they arose in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses.” (Isa. xxxvii. 36.)

Passing from the Prophets to the Psalms, we merely put into one view some of the chief sentences on the subject.

“The ungodly are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. The way of the ungodly shall perish.” (i. 4, 6.) “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;

thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Kiss the Son lest He be angry; and ye perish from the way." (ii. 9, 12.) "Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing. Destroy them, O God, cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions." (v. 6, 10.) "Thou hast destroyed the wicked; Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever." (ix. 5.) "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger; the Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them. Their fruit shalt Thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men." (xxi. 9, 10.) "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, He shall destroy them." (xxviii. 5.) "Let destruction come upon him unawares." (xxxv. 8.) "For evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. He passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together, the end of the wicked shall be cut off." (xxxvii. 9, 10, 20, 36, 38.) "Man that is in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish." (xlix. 20.) "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, and shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place; and root thee out of the land of the living." (lii. 5.) "But Thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction; bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." (lv. 23.) "Let them melt away as waters which run continually, when he bendeth his bow to shoot his

arrows, let them be as cut in pieces." (lviii. 7.) "Consume them in wrath; consume them that they may not be." (lix. 13.) "They shall fall by the sword, they shall be a portion for foxes." (lxiii. 10.) "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." (lxix. 28.) "Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places; Thou castedst them down to destruction. For, lo, they that are far from Thee shall perish; Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from Thee." (lxxiii. 18, 27.) "The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel." (lxxviii. 31.) "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are like grass which groweth up. In the evening it is cut down and withereth. For we are consumed by Thine anger." (xc. 3-7.) "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever." (xcii. 7.) "Let his posterity be cut off, and in the generation following let their name be blotted out." (cix. 13.) "Let them be as grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up." (cxxix. 6.) "And of Thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul." (cxliii. 12.)

Such, then, is the manner in which the Old Testament sets forth destruction, whether as a matter of threat or of execution—destruction of Jews or of Gentiles, of the individual or the mass, from the inhabitants of a village to the population of the globe. We see how large a share it occupies in the burden of prophecy, in the drama of history, in the very breath of psalm. And

then think of the variety of means by which it is brought about. What kind of instrumentality is there that is not employed to effect it? What other palpable result can we name which is directly accomplished by such a multiplicity of agents, or instruments, as the destruction of man? If you look to what is called *nature*, then the region above shoots down its fires to blast; while the sea from beneath pours forth its floods to drown him. The solid earth on which he builds opens its mouth to swallow him up, and the very air which, beyond everything else supplies him with life, is worked up into the tempest which scatters death on every side. The beast of the forest comes forth to prey upon him, and the monster of the deep lies in wait to devour him. All nature, in short, solid, beautiful, regular, harmonious, as it is in itself—nature so kind, so helpful in every way, has for some deep reason been turned into a great workshop for forging the instruments of man's destruction, and a vast laboratory for distilling from its simplest elements, and diffusing through its wide expanse, those subtle poisons which, as an arrow from a bow, mean death to the heart which they attack. And not only nature, but that which we account as of all things most truly supernatural—the angels of light and the spirits of darkness—these also are brought before us, as the ready executioners of a will which nothing can withstand. And strangest perhaps of all—man is employed as the executioner of man. Righteous and wicked alike, the man, or the multitude, are employed for the destruction of their fellows. Thus man is set foremost among “the four sore judgments” by which God would cut off the inhabitants of Jerusalem—“the *sword*, the famine, the noisome beast, and the pestilence.” For, rising

above all means and instruments to the true significance and reality of the case, what does it all mean but this, "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men"?

Of this, then, there can be no doubt, and this is all that I now insist on, that human *destruction* is one of the most notorious things in the history of the world, one of the clearest of the principles in the Scripture representations of the Divine procedure. It may be a mystery, but it is not the less a certainty. Why did God create man at all? Why so patiently, and liberally, support such masses of creatures, with the view of destroying them in the end? Why not either deliver them from the consequences of transgression, or better still from the transgression which, it seems, entails such consequences? Such questions may be interesting, and may seem also natural and proper; but they are entirely outside our line. The fact of destruction remains, and, together with the fact, the principle—"Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

So much at present for destruction, as represented in the Old Testament; and how, you may naturally ask, stands the case in the New? Singularly alike, I answer, and singularly different. The scene has entirely shifted, but the great drama is carried on as before. The act has changed its special character, and yet it belongs as distinctly as ever to the same great class of events. In the Old Testament we meet with judgment *now*, wrath *now*, a cutting off of the life which we have *now*, that is, *destruction*. In the New Testament we find judgment *to come*, wrath *to come*, a cutting off of the life in a *coming state*, but still, as clearly as ever, DESTRUCTION—in both cases the same destruction—but the one

affecting mainly the body, the other affecting soul and body alike—the one temporal, the other final and everlasting—but not on that account less distinctly or decisively DESTRUCTION.*

Before proceeding to the New Testament it may be well to anticipate and answer a question that may have occurred already—Is this destruction, even in the Old Testament, the actual end of the destroyed? Have they not even there a future ascribed to them, implying, of course, that the temporal destruction threatened is not their end?

As to the ungodly having, according to the Old Testament, a future in store for them, there need be, I answer, no question of that. Very little, indeed, is there said about it; and yet there are hints sufficient to warrant the conclusion that even the Old Testament taught it. But this in no way affects what we have been saying. Enough that the destruction threatened is the absolute end of existence *in the sphere to which it points*. That may be simply the sphere of hope, pleasure, action, or, in a word, of life, as spent upon this earth. Then the destruction spoken of is the *end of that*—the absolute break up of man and his existence in that sphere. Go now to any other sphere you please—to any region or state outside this earth and its life—and, supposing the same language to be employed in connection with that, what would you infer? Would it be, that *there* ‘destruction’ means an endless existence in misery? Would it not rather be that there

* What the writer precisely means by the following I do not profess to say, but such testimonies are important—“Life to the godless must be the beginning of destruction; since nothing but God, and that which pleases Him, can permanently exist.”—ARCHBISHOP THOMSON, *Bampton Lecture*, p. 56.

also—yes *there* pre-eminently, as having now got beyond all shadows, into the very heart of the world of realities—destruction, as the lot of a human being, does as surely as anywhere else involve the end of the destroyed; failing which, it can only be regarded as a mistake and a contradiction?

Thus, leaving the Old Testament view of *destruction*, we have seen, as the ground of the whole, the primeval sentence attaching death to sin, and developing itself by the returning of man to dust. In pursuance of the same, we have a reign of death over the human family—universal as it may well be called—the two noted exceptions to the rule being just enough to prove that the death came by no blind fate, or necessary operation of physical law, but through the distinct action of a moral Governor who would show that He had both the power and the will to conquer it. In addition to all which the Old Testament presents us with records of special destruction, partial of course, else the human race had disappeared altogether—special destruction, in short, on account of special sins, but enough to satisfy any observer, who cares for the authority of the book as a true record of events and principles, that the real destruction of rebellious man is one of the most fundamental facts in the government of God.

Such a view the Old Testament does certainly set before us. And whatever reason may be found elsewhere for believing in the immortality of the wicked—there is assuredly none there. The image of God, as once possessed, can never prove the immortality of those who have lost that image now. God's breathing the breath of life into man's nostrils, so as to make him a living soul—not to say how exceedingly like to *natural*

life this seems—cannot prove the immortality of one who “dying shall die”—one sentenced to return to the dust from which he was taken, and now debarred from approaching the tree of life—lest that should any longer be regarded as the symbol, or even the guarantee, of an immortality which is his no longer. Can we, after all, then, persist in maintaining that man, in virtue of his creation, or by necessity of his human nature, is immortal, and yet never knew it till Greek philosophy taught it to him? Must we force ourselves into the horrible belief that all the myriads in Old Testament times who died “without holiness” dropped, as they died, into an eternity of woe—without ever having had one solitary warning that the road they were treading ended in such a doom? For who that knows what he is speaking of will venture to affirm that the excited question in regard to “everlasting burnings,” as put by “the sinners in Zion,” implies such an understanding? (Isaiah xxxiii. 14.) If any one doubt it, let him search the Old Testament through for that word ‘everlasting,’ and see whether it does, in its *general application*, really mean ‘endless.’ Let him see whether, as an attribute, it serves in any case to express the absolute period of its subject; or whether it be not rather, in each case, the *character* of the subject that determines the *period*. For is it not plain that in the Old Testament everlasting means enduring throughout the whole of the period properly pertaining to the thing in question? That may be the existence of Jehovah, or the priesthood of Aaron; the stability of the earth, or the service of a slave;* be it what it may, it is its nature that determines the true idea of the ‘everlasting.’ Considering

* Isa. xl. 28; Num. xxv. 13; Eccles. i. 4; Exod. xxi. 6.

all which, what can the word mean in this place, when stretched to the very utmost, but simply—lasting while the individuals themselves last? As to how long that is to be no vestige of information is given. And what other view do the same wretched tremblers take, when they speak of the fire as “devouring”? What, in short, can that be, at the very worst, but the “unquenchable fire which *burns up* the chaff”—“the fiery indignation which shall *devour* the adversaries”?

CHAPTER II.

DESTRUCTION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

To go from the Old Testament to the New is not like taking a journey into a far off and foreign country—but rather like stepping from one field to another of the same estate—the soil the same, the management the same, the special produce only being different. Or rather, it is like moving from a lower apartment to a higher in the same palace or temple—every step upward being only a new development of the principles on account of which the building was constructed, and which the lowest story exhibits as really, though not so clearly or fully as the highest. Both are from one Author, and for one end; both appeared in the same region of the world, and through the instrumentality of the same people. To the minds, and by the minds, which had already breathed the atmosphere of the Old Testament, was the New presented. Besides which, there is no book so catholic in its style and sentiment as the Bible—none which can compare with it as the Book for the world.

Take, then, a connected view of those passages in the New Testament which relate to human destruction—viewed physically or spiritually—as occurring here or hereafter—in regard to individuals, or companies of mankind. Many of these, it will be observed, serve our

purpose no farther than as they illustrate the sense in which the language is used—a class to which the very first will be seen to belong.

“Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.” (Matt. ii. 13.) “The axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (iii. 10, 12.) “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” (v. 29, 30.) “Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction. . . . Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down; and cast into the fire.” (vii. 13, 19.) “Lord, save us; we perish.” (viii. 25.) “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” (x. 28, 39.) “They consulted how they might destroy Him.” (xii. 14.) “Bind them in bundles to burn them up.” (xiii. 30.) “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (xvi. 25, 26.) “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost (as *e.g.* the lost sheep); even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” (xviii. 11, 14.) “He will miserably destroy those wicked men. Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever

it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." (xxi. 41, 44.) "He sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers." (xxii. 7.) "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (xxvi. 52.) "That they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus." (xxvii. 20.)

"Art thou come to destroy us?" (Mark i. 24.) "It hath cast him into the fire and into the waters, to destroy him." (ix. 22.)

"Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil; to save life, or to destroy it?" (Luke vi. 9.) "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." (ix. 56.) "Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple." (xi. 51.) "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (xiii. 3, 5.) "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (33.) "I perish with hunger." (xv. 17.) "The flood came and destroyed them all." (xvii. 27.) "It rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." (29.)

"That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 15, 16.) "The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." (x. 10.) "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (xi. 50.) "He that loveth his life shall lose it." (xii. 25.) "None of them is lost but the son of perdition." (xvii. 12.) "It was expedient that one man should die (be destroyed) for the people." (xviii. 14.)

"Every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts iii. 23.)

"Judas of Galilee, he also perished." (v. 37.) "Thy money perish with thee." (viii. 20.) "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." (xiii. 41.) "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction." (xxv. 16.) "I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage (loss), not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship." (xxvii. 10, 22.)

"The judgment of God, that they which do such things are worthy of death." (Rom. i. 32.) "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law." (ii. 12.) "Vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction" [like the potter's vessel marred and shattered]. (ix. 22.) "Be not destroying with thy meat him for whom Christ died." (xiv. 15.)

"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." (1 Cor. i. 18.) "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." (iii. 17.) "Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish (be destroyed)?" (viii. 11.) "They were destroyed of serpents;—were destroyed of the destroyer." (x. 9, 10.) "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (xv. 18.)

"A sweet savour in them that perish." (2 Cor. ii. 15.) "It is hid to them that perish. Cast down, but not destroyed." (iv. 3, 9.)

"He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption (or destruction)." (Gal. vi. 8.)

"Which is to them an evident token of perdition." (Phil. i. 28.) "Whose end is destruction." (iii. 19.)

"Sudden destruction cometh upon them." (1 Thess. v. 3.)

“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; and from the glory of His power.” (2 Thess. i. 9.) “The son of perdition, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. All deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.” (ii. 3, 8, 10.)

“They fall into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” (1 Tim. vi. 9.)

“Fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.” (Heb. x. 27, 28, 39.) “By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not.” (xi. 31.)

“There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.” (James iv. 12.)

“They bring upon themselves swift destruction. Their damnation (destruction) slumbereth not” [this being likened to the destruction in the days of Noah and Lot,] (2 Peter ii. 1, 3, 5–7.) “These, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, shall utterly perish in their own corruption.” (12.) [Now if this occurred in the Old Testament it might be said that we had a description only of the *immediate* end of the wicked without any reference to their *ultimate state*. But in the New Testament there is no room for such a plea—the reference in that being directly to the ultimate. There remains, therefore, no alternative but to take the end of the wicked as truly described by the *language employed*, or to argue that language cannot, *in such a case*, be taken in its natural, and elsewhere inevitable, sense—because in that sense it cannot apply to men !

That is to say, the language *is* applied to men's souls; but *because it is so*, it must not be understood in this case as it must be in every other connection!] "The world that then was being overflowed with water perished." (iii. 6.) [He does not say 'earth,' (expressly distinguishing it from that, as spoken of in verses 5, 7, 13,) but 'world,' a word constantly used for the earth's inhabitants; *e.g.*, "The whole world lieth in wickedness," "The world cannot hate you, but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil;" "I pray not for the world," &c.] "The perdition of ungodly men . . . They wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction." (7, 16.)

"Having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not." (Jude 5.)

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death I will kill her children with death As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers." (Rev. ii. 11, 23, 27.) "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." (iii. 5; *cf.* Ex. xxxii. 32, 33.) "Blot me out of thy book; him will I blot out of my book." "Power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." (vi. 8.) "And shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth." (xi. 18.) "The beast shall go into perdition." (xvii. 8, 11.) "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. This is THE SECOND DEATH." (xx. 14, 15.) "God shall take away his part out of the book of life." (xxii. 19.)

Such are the passages that refer to *destruction*, under

one form or other, reserving at present those that speak so very significantly of *death*. On what ground, then, can it be maintained that the words *destroy*, *lose*, *perish* have a meaning in the New Testament so extremely different to what they have in the Old? Who will deny or question that “destroy” in the Old Testament, and in ordinary discourse means *to bring to an end*?—“perish,” *to come to an end*?—and “lose,” *to cease to have*? Why, then, should they in the New Testament only have another, and so strangely different a meaning? If it has pleased God, by such language to enlighten us in reference to the desert and doom of a sinful soul, why should we refuse the light, and persist in maintaining that, when so employed, the words must on no account be taken in this their ordinary sense? In reference to a *soul*, I say; for in regard to other things, there is no hesitation. Thus no one thinks of denying that when Herod, or the Pharisees, sought to destroy Jesus, the meaning is that they desired to *put an end to Him*. So, when the devils seek to destroy the possessed youth; or when Jesus asks, “Is it lawful to destroy life, or to save it;” or declares, “The Son of Man is not come to *destroy* men’s *lives*, but to save them;” or says, “The flood came and destroyed them all;” or, “It rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all;” or, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.” In all such cases the meaning is one and unquestionable. Nor had Caiaphas any other meaning when he said, “It is expedient that one should die (be destroyed) for the people;” or Paul, when he referred to those who “had been destroyed of serpents,” and “of the destroyer;” or Jude, when he said that “God, having

saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." And so, when the sentence was passed on the husbandmen, "He will miserably *destroy* these wicked men"—the one meaning of the utterance in the parabolic view was that they should be cut off, or put out of being; while, as to the judgment in its ulterior sense, this even there was an essential part of the punishment threatened.

Take now, after all this, the solemn case in which our Lord warns His disciples against "fearing them who can only kill the body," exhorting them to "fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell"—and how is it possible to believe that here only this simple, distinct, well-understood, word does not, and cannot mean to *put an end to*? Or, when the apostle speaks of the wicked, under the figure of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," is it easy to believe that, while the destruction of the potter's vessel involves the real end of that, as the object from which the sentiment is borrowed, it has no such meaning as regards the object to which it is applied?—the human vessel, as immortal, being necessarily incapable of coming to an end!

Or, while we take the word "*lose*," as meaning in all other cases "cease to have," must it be constantly made the ground of a riddle, and a contradiction, in regard to the soul, under the fiction of our, in some unnatural way, losing a thing which we can never really *cease to have*?

Or the word *perish*, if possible still more important, from the greater frequency of its employment, as constantly meaning to *come to an end*. Thus the alarmed disciples use it when they cry, "Lord, save us; we

perish." In this sense, "they that take the sword *perish* by the sword." Thus "Zacharias *perished* between the temple and the altar;" and the entire prophetic company is said to *perish* in Jerusalem; and Judas of Galilee *perished* in the wilderness; and "Rahab *perished* not with them that believed not." Are we to suppose, then, that while this—whether in the Bible or elsewhere, in Old Testament or New—is the regular sense of the word, it cannot be its sense when used in reference to a soul? Thus, *e. g.*, when we read, "As many as have sinned without law shall also *perish* without law"—must we, in deference to some theory of immortality, be forbidden to take the word as meaning *cease to be*—and be commanded to take it, as if it could, and must, really mean to continue imperishable in misery?

There is one passage in which the current view of the word 'perish' seems peculiarly inappropriate—"I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Now, just take 'perish' as meaning to *endure ceaseless misery*, and see what the sentiment becomes—"They shall never endure ceaseless misery!" Is this, I ask, a tolerable sense of the word? Or rather, is not the case one of those in which by the application of a very simple test, error at once betrays itself?

And further, where the expression gets its force, as it commonly does, from some illustrative circumstance—must we, in such cases also, allow the simple sense of the word to the circumstance illustrating, and yet be forbidden to regard the momentous spiritual event illustrated as, in any degree, partaking of the essential character belonging to the other? Thus, where, in reference to sheep as perishing, or ceasing to be, our Lord says, "My sheep shall never perish"—can we fail

to see that to His sheep alone, among all human beings, He attributes the property of being imperishable—and that, in the very simple sense of possessing a ceaseless existence?

Or, where the prodigal, in saying, "I perish with hunger," means that by the most painful process he is in the way of coming to an end—shall such an illustration be used to illustrate the case of the perishing sinner, as the case of one whose being and misery alike are both of necessity endless? So, when our Lord says, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"—shall we suppose that the case of the impenitent—instead of *resembling as to its end* the two unfortunate incidents referred to—differs from them in this: that the impenitent have no end; though this was the only circumstance which had been referred to by the bystanders, when pointing to those who had been cut off by Pilate—the only circumstance which had furnished the occasion for the warning, "Ye shall all *likewise* perish"? Or, once more, when, in that greatest of announcements ("God so loved the world," &c.), our Lord was manifestly referring to the perishing of the Israelites through the fiery serpents—can we allow ourselves to think that the natural perishing of the Israelites, and the spiritual perishing of the sinner, instead of having any common measure or resemblance, are, in reality, utterly unlike and incommensurable? Is this the style in which our Master taught? Is this the sense in which Nicodemus would understand Him? Let the human teacher, then, if he can and choose, tell me that man is naturally and necessarily immortal, and therefore cannot, in the ordinary sense of language, *perish*,—so long, on the other hand, as the Heavenly Teacher tells me that a

man *can perish*, I must infer that man is *not* naturally and necessarily immortal. And I can see, moreover, that, while the destruction of natural life, which the Old Testament proclaims, can well admit of a further existence in order to retribution—on the other hand, the destruction of the soul which the New Testament announces can admit of no such change, or continuance in being; and for this simple reason—because it is the destruction of the sinner in his future and final state, a destruction which requires no further retribution, and admits of no further reparation—even an “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.”

Or if, leaving single expressions, we attend to those general pictures of destruction so frequently occurring in our Lord’s teaching, what other conclusion is possible? As soon as I shall come to see that all these views of things coming to an end can furnish really good illustrations of the misery of the wicked as *having no end*—then, but not till then, can I begin to review the sentiments now expressed. Show me that a house ceasing to be a house through the violence of the tempest, or the potter’s vessel ceasing to be a vessel under the stroke of an iron rod, or a man ceasing to be a man by being broken to pieces, or ground to powder—show me that these are the fittest illustrations which the most exquisite of teachers could find for the agony of an immortal being—show me this, and I will again believe in that agony. Show me that worthless tares, and barren trees, cast into a fire to be consumed, are good illustrations of the endless suffering of a creature that can never be consumed;—show me, above all, that chaff burnt up with unquenchable fire is a good and instructive representation of sinners burning, and burning, and

burning on, but never burnt up—show me this, and I will believe even that. But then I must first have lost all sense of what is now to me the prime element in the propriety of language—I must have lost all confidence in the fitness of figures to express what is manifestly intended by them—I must have abandoned what I feel to be the safe harbour of truth, as a thing that can be either defined or demonstrated—and must have drifted out among the shoals and currents of dogmatical opinion, imperious tradition, or presumptuous rationalism.

And, in addition to all this, is it nothing that our Lord and His apostles constantly speak of life and death in a way that is perfectly in harmony with the natural, how can I but say, the necessary, sense of these expressions and representations? It is easy, of course, to say that the life intended is only the right and happy state of an immortal soul. Nor do I deny for a moment that character, as well as continuance, is an essential element in the case. But is the one independent of the other? That is the question. Is the state of evil and suffering equally enduring with the state of good and glory? Can you separate between holy character and endless duration? Man, I know, can, and does. What if the word of God does not? Then be persuaded, at any cost, to go with us, when, in deference to that word, we dare not and cannot attempt the separation.

Hear, then, how the New Testament—for already we have seen how the Old—refers to life and death respectively. Life is spoken of as the opposite of *destruction*—“Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; narrow the way that leadeth unto life.” But if destruction

means here, as elsewhere, the coming miserably to an end, then life, as its opposite, must mean the never coming to an end—instead of, as it is said, the happy condition of a creature necessarily immortal. “Who-soever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” Now, surely, it would be only natural and reasonable to regard *eternal life* as equivalent to *living eternally*. But how is it possible, on any rational ground, to reject a view so natural, when we find that this eternal life is the exact opposite of that perishing, or coming to an end, which otherwise is the doom of guilty man? To the same purpose—“He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed *from death unto life*.” (John v. 24.) That is to say, death *was* his portion, but now it is life. It is no answer to this to quote, as is constantly done, the succeeding verses as applied by our Lord to actually existing sinners—“The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” ‘See,’ it is said, ‘they have existence, and yet it is said “they shall live;”’ what, then, but a purely moral condition (it is added) can be designed by life on the one hand, and death on the other?’ True, I answer, a moral condition is referred to, but it by no means follows that that only is had in view. What if the idea be that the dead are those who, with no spiritual life now, have no lasting life at all! What if the life bestowed is not only a good spiritual condition given to replace a bad one; but an endowment which, while it is the only good one, is at the same time the only everlasting one; as it is said, “The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for

ever!" And that such is precisely the meaning of the language may be, I sincerely believe, absolutely demonstrated. For just take the words that follow the great assertion with which we are now engaged—"As the Father hath life in Himself." What, now, is this life but a necessary, and therefore immortal, existence on either side—the implication always being that that existence is as truly blessed as it is necessary and endless? How, then, are we to understand the life bestowed on sinful creatures by the Son, except as an actual immortality—bestowed, and therefore *not* an original endowment—bestowed by *Him*, and therefore truly *blessed*? Hence, the alternative view of resurrection as being to life, or to damnation. Hence the similar language occurring just before our present passage—"As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth (giveth life to) whom He will." Hence that still more extraordinary saying which occurs in the great discourse upon the Bread of Life in the following chapter—a saying so deep and yet so simple, as illustrating the connection between the Son of God and His people on the one hand, by the connection between the Father and the Son on the other—"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." The Father's living is undoubtedly the highest moral condition—but it is as surely a *necessary existence*—being in each respect a matter of infinite excellence. The *Son's living* harmonizes with this in both respects. What follows, then, but that our living *by the Son*, while presenting no such opportunity for the infinite, is at once the only *moral good*, and the only *endless being* possible for man?

And what is it but just this that the Saviour insists upon so anxiously throughout the whole of that discourse, in speaking of the means and the measure of the life which He bestows? As for example, "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." That is to say, the wilderness manna conferred no immortality upon them. While the sentence following as distinctly shows that such immortality had no more come by Adam or by Abraham than by Moses—"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die"—repeating, and repeating the same sentiment in every variety of form;—"Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you; whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 50-54.) Suffice it, after this, simply to refer to such a saying as that, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John viii. 51)—connecting it with the kindred words, "neither can they die any more." (Luke xx. 36.) From all which I infer that, apart from Christ, there is only death for man—while in and with Him alone is there life and immortality. And these, as eternally designed by God for perishing men through the life and death of His Son, have now been brought to light in the gospel. (2 Tim. i. 9, 10.) Such I understand to be the teaching of Scripture on this momentous theme.

In conclusion, I have only to ask that the following passages be well considered in the light of these principles:—"Knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death" (Rom.

i. 32); "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12); "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23); "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die" (Rom. viii. 13); "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James i. 15); "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death" (James v. 20); "I will kill her children with death" (Rev. ii. 23); "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev. xx. 14, 15.)

Where, then, after all this, is the ground for the belief in that 'immortal,' 'never dying' soul, of which we hear so much? What proof of man's natural immortality does the New Testament furnish? The reply will probably be—"Where their worm dieth not." But that is no proof of immortality. "*Their* worm" cannot, at the very longest, survive themselves—and, if *they* are to perish, what, then, becomes of "their worm"? Or, is this the proof—"Depart, ye cursed, into *the* everlasting fire"? But how does it appear that the duration of a fire proves the equal duration of that which is cast into it—especially when the one is described as "unquenchable," and the other as "chaff to be burnt up"? Or, once more, is it this—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal"? But what, again, if the Saviour, and the Scripture, be allowed to explain what the punishment is! And what if the explanation be that it is "everlasting destruction?" And then, if any one say, 'Oh, that is only an abuse of language; that will never do'—I answer him, and with very great confidence, that, in reality, nothing else will do at all. For what, I again ask,—and there

is no need to be ashamed of the question—what is life everlasting, but living everlastingly? And lest any one should take this for a shallow answer, and be prepared with the very easy remark, ‘Oh, life everlasting is surely an existence which is endlessly good and happy.’ Most certainly, I answer; and so is ‘living everlastingly,’ if we may judge from what the Scripture says of it. Meanwhile, it is sufficient that we note the contrast between the two awards. To ‘live everlastingly’ is the lot of the righteous: and to this the other company *does not attain*. The portion of the one, in short, is ‘immortality’—a state invariably blessed. The portion of the other is ‘everlasting destruction.’*

* The only expression in the Gospels or Epistles which, taken by itself, can be allowed to have any semblance of plausibility as an argument for the endless existence of the wicked, is this expression ‘everlasting punishment.’ Now, if ‘punishment’ (κόλασις) were necessarily equivalent to ‘suffering,’ the difficulty would be serious in the face of all that we read of ‘destruction.’ On the other hand, the word in classical Greek had been understood to signify *corrective* punishment; and hence the expression has been much relied on (as *e.g.* by Jukes on “Restitution,”) for the proving of ‘restoration.’ This last argument is altogether neutralized by the unquestionable fact that the word was not thus *speciallly* employed in later times. (See Trench, “Synonyms of New Testament,” to which much might be added on the point.) The fact is that κόλασις came to lose that special sense, as compared with τιμωρία, which had originally belonged to it. (See them interchanged in Chrysostom, Hom. on 2 Cor. v.) But now one thing is sufficient for our purpose—and it does not seem possible to deny it; namely, that κόλασις, as a very common word simply for ‘punishment,’ *could properly be applied where the punishment was death*. And precisely thus does Chrysostom employ κολλάω in the passage just referred to (quoted in chap. xiv. below)—namely, the illustration of a robber who, being under a penalty of death, has his life redeemed by the death of the king’s son.

CHAPTER III.

THE LAW AND ITS PENALTY.

God is a Lawgiver as surely as He is a Creator. Nothing exists which He has not created, and He has created nothing which He has not subjected to law. Not a stone, plant, or animal—not a drop of water, or a ray of light—not an atom of air or particle of dust, but He has fixed the rule or method according to which it is to act or to grow. This is what we call natural or physical law, extending in its dominion, by operations inconceivably minute, from the various elements of each created thing, to the entire mass of worlds and systems. And should any one, except the Creator Himself, attempt to set aside these laws, the consequence is certain. The law pursues its undeviating course, while the presumptuous meddler incurs a penalty, ranging from some trifling inconvenience to the most awful destruction. To all material things, in short, have certain properties, with their appropriate consequences, been attached, affecting us according to the character of our connection with them. These may be patent to the popular eye, or they may come up only to the scientific gaze. One way or other, they represent an order which no one may with safety derange; a law which no one may with impunity disobey.

And, as in the natural world, so in the moral, law universally reigns—law equally perfect in its adaptation to the subjects of its various spheres—equally expressive of the Creator's mind, however varied that may be—and equally impossible, therefore, to be set aside in any of its operations or their results. At the same time, as the moral world, in regard to dignity of character and design, excels the natural—excels it, in short, as the conscious image of the Creator ever must excel the unconscious product of His power—so must moral law claim superiority over natural. For now, with the promulgation of that, have these two beings come into intelligent contact—the Eternal God, and the child of time. The glorious Creator has revealed Himself to an eye which He made for the sight; and the righteous Governor has spoken out in an ear which He designed for the voice. An all-commanding Mind has uttered its pleasure to a mind capable of subjection; while a will of infinite compass has signified its desire to a will which, if it do not obey, must be checked at every turn. It is the prescription of authority. It is the voice of LAW. And that is a voice which, whether low or high, soft or stern, never in one of its tones or demands—and that just because *it is law*—can mean *less* than, Thou SHALT, or Thou SHALT NOT. Take the summary of moral law, as given by the greatest of Teachers, and it is this, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Take a specimen of the same as it came home to the conscience of a man alike remarkable for his rebellion and his repentance, his natural capacity and his spiritual consecration—and it is this, “Thou shalt not covet.” It is indeed strange—this approach of the

Governor to the subject—this address of the commanding to the obeying or disobeying will. Moral law is certainly very strange. Yes, and everything is strange. Uncreated existence, and created too; natural being, and moral being; natural law, and moral law—they are all strange. But the moral is the stranger; and that, in proportion as it is the more real of the two, dealing as it does more directly than the other with the I AM Himself.

If such, then, be moral law, its very first whisper is enough to intimate that the Creator has come to have fellowship with the creature. But if God be good, His law must be good too; if God be love, so must His law be. For even God can only speak out what is in His mind, and act out what belongs to His nature. Thus, does He say, Love me—Serve me—Be holy, as I am holy?—then, at the same time, He says, Enjoy me—Have fellowship with me—and in my company be thou blessed. For the very conception and expression of such a will can be nothing less than a taking of the creature into communion with the Creator—even a communion which means participation with Him in His thoughts, feelings, purposes; and therefore in His blessedness and joy. The Divine mandate may, in the first instance, belong specially to what is commonly called a season of ‘probation.’ Then will obedience for that season be happiness. Or again, the probation may be over, and the confirmation of the well-proved creature complete; then will this continued existence be a *life* in the highest sense in which life is possible—life in the most intimate connection with the living God;—the Creator still, as the righteous Governor, expressing His will, and the loving creature still as an obedient

subject accepting it—even that will, from the uttering of which on the one hand, or the doing of it on the other, blessedness is alike inseparable. How long such happy, obedient, existence may or must last, we may not be able positively to say. But it is difficult, and certainly not needful, to think of it as ever ending.

Thus God is a *LAWGIVER*. Not only a Creator and Provider, a Friend and a Guide, or, in a single word, a *FATHER*; but just as surely, and in the strictest sense, a *LAWGIVER*. How far the two characters are identical, and how far they are separable, need not now be discussed. Enough that, in every sense of the word, and with all the consequences attaching to the position, *HE IS A LAWGIVER*.

Now, one of these consequences is that punishment must follow sin. For if it be true that, “Where no law is, there is no transgression,” it is equally true that, where there is no penalty, there is no law. So it is even in human jurisdiction,* much more in the divine. In human, I say, for it is only an abuse of language, a pretence of authority, a mockery of a fellow-creature, to address to him something with the sound or semblance of law, but which he may obey or disobey at will, and with equal freedom from penalty. Take the simplest possible case of law or command. You forbid a child to do something—meaning it to understand that you are really exercising authority, really issuing a command. The thing is done, we shall say, and you take no notice of it—show no displeasure—follow it up with no unpleasant consequences. Vary the supposition. Suppose it to be the most serious exercise of authority by a parent, the most decided requirement of service by

* See note at the end of this chapter.

a master, or the most weighty injunction by a ruler to his people; and just suppose this determinedly disobeyed on the one side, and the disobedience quietly overlooked on the other. Then there has been, indeed, the voice of command, the show of authority, but nothing more. Law may have been *pretended*, but it seems not to have been *intended*. Or, if it ever really was intended, the intention, as the event shows, has been abandoned, and that which looked like law turns out to have been only a weak assumption of authority; or, at the best, a kind wish, or a good advice; or an announcement that a certain course is dutiful and highly desirable; or a piece of information, exhortation, or warning, under the form of law, as to the results, possible or certain, of some particular line of conduct. The absence of penalty proves the absence of all actual law. That penalty might, of course, be anything, from the lightest to the heaviest. The parent may threaten a slight suspension of liberty; the master may impose a serious loss of wages; the magistrate may sentence the offender to the loss of his life; and such penalty may be excessive, or it may be reasonable. But penalty there must be, wise or unwise, righteous or wrong, before you can affirm the presence of law.

Nor will it serve for the indispensable element of penalty, if I merely connect with some seeming command the necessary result of infringing some natural law. Thus suppose I say to my child—I command you not to drink this, for it is poison, and it will be your death. Now if that be all, I may take away the semblance of command at once: for I am only informing him of the natural operation which will follow the drinking—and anyone can do that without the form or

pretence of a command. Figuratively speaking, he must pay the penalty of disobedience to an important natural law if he drink; but of law, on my part, there is actually nothing.

It is different, however, if the prohibition against some pernicious indulgence comes from Him who, Himself the author of natural law, has by that signified His own will to His creatures. I might, of course, *drink* and *die*, without any knowledge of the danger incurred. And such would be simply an accident, or a natural operation, with no sin on my part, nor occasion given for saying that I had incurred the penalty of violating even a natural law. But if, warned of the evil, and loving the cup to which, with more or less of certainty, disease and death have been annexed, I still choose to indulge in it—then I am manifestly guilty of violating a prime law of nature—yes, guilty of direct rebellion against the God of nature—who, while forbidding me to do the thing, which I have done, was requiring me to do another thing, which I have not done. And thus, while my body is hurt by the transgressing of the natural law, I am equally guilty of disobedience to a moral law—the penalty of which I have as distinctly incurred.

It is, in short, the *authority* of God—the voice which declares, ‘Thou shalt,’ or ‘Thou shalt not’—it is this that really makes the divine law. It is this to which is annexed the penalty. It is the transgressing of this that constitutes sin, and brings down sin’s award. Let us picture as we will the unhappy accompaniments of a certain moral or spiritual state; these in themselves, apart from that authority which sin has outraged, no more constitute the real penalty of the law than does

the merely natural result of any natural actions, apart from a reference to the will of Him who is the God of nature. It needs the violation of that, in either department, to make a sin. For "sin is the transgression of the law," And the law—not the counsel, or the wish, but the law, which says, 'Thou shalt not sin,' says also, 'If thou sin thou shalt be punished.'

Does this matter still admit of doubt? Then let God's revealed will clear it up. Take the first recorded of all laws—'Thou shalt not eat of the tree;' to that there was, surely enough, a penalty attached. Or take the statute against murder; or the command to circumcise Abraham's seed; or the law of the Sabbath; or that against idolatry;* these, with their penalties, are but a sample of all laws. And whatever question may arise as to how that penalty was in any case carried out—whatever complication may have gathered about the administration of the Judge in a world like this—what with divine forbearance on the one hand, or defective human government on the other—*there* stands the great fact, that, when God thus expressed His will, He intimated also that the transgressor should suffer;—yes, suffer a direct infliction from the hand of the Lawgiver, in contradistinction to any merely natural consequences of an unhappy kind, attaching either to the body or the soul of the transgressor.

Once more, are we not told that the divine law speaks to all who are under it, with this distinct view, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God"? (Rom. iii. 19.) But what possible meaning can such a sentence have, if it be not true that the Lawgiver regards every sinner as under a real

* Gen. ix. 6; xvii. 14; Exod. xxxi. 15; xxii. 20.

penalty of some sort on account of his transgression? Again, we are told, "The law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression." (Rom. iv. 15.) Does not this plainly teach us that sin is a direct running counter to the law of God, the business of that law in such a case being to "work wrath"? And can such "working of wrath" mean less than the proclaiming of it, and pointing to it as the proper recompence of sin, with a vigorous stirring up of the conscience to its duty in the matter? And is not this a distinct announcement of penalty as attached to disobedience?

Once more, without unduly anticipating another branch of our subject, is it not certain that all sinners need forgiveness from God? But what is the forgiveness of a sovereign, if not his remitting a penalty due to the subject for neglect of his injunctions?

Thus far in regard to the general connection of law and penalty. And now to be more specific, what *is* the penalty that God has attached to transgression? Some *loss* or *suffering*, it must of course be, for that is essential to all penalty. But, as to the character or amount of the penal infliction, what can we say? We may, indeed, reason about it to any length; but how shall we ever reason out with certainty from any principles in our possession the real sum total of what sin deserves from God? It is easy, indeed, to treat words and ideas as so many mathematical symbols, and to argue from such, with great ability and confidence, that sin, being committed against a God of infinite excellence, can be no less than an infinite evil, attended by an infinite guilt, and therefore worthy of an infinite punishment, realisable only in eternal misery. But it is easy also

to reply that such a view confounds all distinction between the extremely different demerit of different sins :—that, in treating sin as an infinite evil, it really treats each and every sinner, without exception, as capable and guilty of an infinite badness, though he be really incapable of anything infinite at all ;—while, at the same time, the Bible contains no trace of any such style of computation. It is impossible, in short, ever to settle such a question by reasoning. But suppose we try how far we can go with sobriety, and a fair probability of accuracy.*

Here, then—as I would venture to say—is a creature

* “For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is His wrath also? Be it: man is not so,
But mortal doomed. How can He exercise
Wrath without end on man whom death must end?
Can He make deathless death? That were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God Himself
Impossible is held, as argument
Of weakness, not of power. Will He draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
In punished man, to satisfy his rigour,
Satisfied never? That were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and nature's law,
By which all causes else according still
To the reception of their matter act;
Not to the extent of their own sphere.”

Thus does Milton make Adam *reason* in regard to his sentence; with nothing on the side of *endless misery*, but a certain vague “fear” which “comes thundering back with dreadful revolution.” And then, as if to clear away the “thundering fear,” God is represented as saying—

“I at first with two fair gifts
Created him endowed—with happiness
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other served but to eternize woe,
Till I provided death.”

[The only “second life” alluded to being that of the “just.”]

Paradise Lost, x. 794, &c. ; xi. 57, &c.

made by God in His own image, subject to divine law, and framed for divine fellowship—a creature capable of living the “life of God,” and enjoying that favour of God, which in itself constitutes the highest life. But this creature has sinned against God’s law; and, by doing so, has refused this life, favour, fellowship. For all these were bound up with obedience; and the cord of that being broken, they are all of necessity gone. What, then, if the consequence be that the rebel must be made to feel, by the endurance of *penal evil*, something answering to what the Lawgiver feels in the way of *righteous displeasure*! ‘Thou hast rejected this life’—might not the great Governor say?—‘and with this life the likeness, favour, fellowship of thy God. And now, as was announced before transgression, there remains no life at all for thee to live. To grant a fresh life for thee to spend in self-indulgence is out of the question now; for then would thy Lawgiver be abdicating His position, and surrendering His authority to a rebel. While, on the other hand, the grant of a life, to be spent only in the wickedness and agony of an endless rebellion, would be as contrary to the purpose of creation, and the pleasure of the Creator, as to the interests of the creature. Therefore, let the warning take effect, let the sentence be executed—“DYING THOU SHALT DIE.”’

Is such a train of thought unreasonable? I venture to think not. But then I must allow that all this is after the event, and we must not unduly assume that the matter would have been so clear beforehand. Now, however, the judgment has been uttered in our ears—the sentence executed before our eyes; and there need be no longer any question as to the real penalty attached

to transgression. That penalty is *death* or DESTRUCTION, in the genuine sense of the words. Is not this the simple view expressed in that utterance which still underlies all God's dealings with a sinful world—"In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die"?—the Divine mouth itself expounding the sentence by adding, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."

What though Adam did not absolutely come to an end on the literal *day* of his transgression? Is it not possible that a man may have his death-warrant handed to him, as a thing liable to be at any moment executed, while yet, for very important reasons, he may have to pass through a process both lengthened and miserable before reaching his actual end? May we not fairly regard a creature as beginning to die on the day that he loses his immortality? And is it not, at the same time, possible that, without any purpose to relax the penalty in regard to natural death, there may still be a provision through which, in accordance with the highest principles of law, the death of the soul, and the final extinction of the man, though equally threatened, may be averted? This last question I ask, of course, only in view of the event, and in the light of the Gospel. And I ask it as a question which no one is entitled to negative, until he has shown that the Gospel has no right to a hearing in the matter.

Again, making full allowance for the special object of the message given to Ezekiel, and remembering that, directly viewed, it referred to this life only—but remembering also that God's administration in the lower sphere is most truly typical of His method in the higher—taking all this into account, can we question

that the extinction of life (whether in this world, as expressly stated, or in the world to come, by the most distinct implication) is the actual event announced in the sentence, "The soul that sinneth it shall die"?

So, when we find the Saviour expressly declaring that 'dying' or 'perishing' is the only doom that any man may venture to look for, apart from *Him*, how can we avoid the conclusion that He is pointing on the one hand to the law, with its essential penalty, and on the other to God's deliverance from that destruction, of which the meaning would have been so obvious, had not men so strangely agreed to ignore some of the plainest landmarks of God's government, misled by the bewitching theory of a universal immortality?

Or, when the apostle declares that "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," and then subjoins that "they which do such things are worthy of *death*"—can we doubt that he is declaring, on the one hand, what the wrath leads to, namely, *death*, as a real *destruction of being*; and, on the other hand, what the death is, as that terrible experience, on our part, by which the wrath is realized and consummated? (Rom. i. 18, 32.)

But think not that such sentences stand alone, as mere twigs to be caught at in the too common theological fashion of holding on to some dogma as for life, in spite of all sense and connexion. For, just see how simply the apostle confirms all this: There shall be "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," he teaches, "upon *every soul* of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;" and then he adds that, "As many as have sinned without law (or special

revelation of God's will) shall also perish without law." What, then, but the Divine judgment against sin—as the penalty of a law written even on heathen hearts—can be designed by such *perishing*?—that dreadful experience already described by him being, as before, the instrumentality and aggravation of the actual destruction. (Rom. ii. 8, 9, 12.)

Again, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (iii. 23). Thus 'sinning' is the guilty means; 'coming short of,' *i.e.* missing or failing to win, the glory of God, is the melancholy condition into which by sin all men have brought themselves. But what if the glory, thus missed and lost, be just eternal life—that very life which redemption restores? That the apostle means to signify as much seems exceedingly plain. (v. 2.) And what, again, if 'eternal' life be neither more nor less than 'endless' life, as a state invariably and essentially blessed? What if it be so? It seems impossible to gainsay it. Then it is plain what the death must be which is the consequence of sin, and the penalty of the law.

Turn next to the passage in the same epistle (v. 12–21), where we find the two Adams set forth as standing at the head of mankind, whether in respect to law and death, or grace and life. The death presented in the opening of the passage *must* be that visible, palpable evil which consists in the extinction of natural life. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Now, while it is freely granted that, in the course of his argument, he glides on, as his custom is, from death in one sphere to death in another—from death under the lightest to death under the heaviest form—yet

surely we are entitled to maintain that it must be *one kind* of evil which he presents to view throughout. There may be much of specific difference between the death of the mere body, and the death of the human being as *affecting body and soul together*; but still it would seem that the expression must have the same generic meaning in every case—full allowance being always made for difference of circumstances, or experience, as required by the special character of the subject. Within such limits it is safe and reasonable to interpret words. But what safety or reason is there in asserting—what but the licentiousness of blind dogmatism is it to maintain, that, while death in the one sphere means a real extinction—however painful its precursors—death in the other sphere, as a matter which the wary writer glides into so smoothly, instead of being the same sort of thing, is nothing less than the tremendous contrast, the inconceivably awful opposite of it? For such, however it may be explained or coloured, must ever be in the view of man's common sense—and woe to religion when it takes leave of common sense!—such must ever remain the distinctive difference between that actual death which involves an end, and that assumed death which would mean a misery without end.

And, as if to preclude the very possibility of that interpretation which now goes for the only sound one, the apostle—though never dreaming surely of what would happen to his words—has expressly connected death, simply *death*, with Adam and sin; but life *eternal* with Christ and grace. Such is his doctrine. And not only so, but he expressly institutes a comparison between the fruits of sin and of grace respectively—a com-

parison so bright and joyous as might utterly stagger and petrify in his dark belief any theologian who, with the supposed help of the apostle, has accustomed his eye to wander over a fathomless ocean of endless woe, as in his view the only proper and divinely appointed abode for myriads of undying rebels. And all this because he regards it as the meaning of the simple word *death*, though that be set over against *eternal life*! "For where sin abounded, grace superabounded; that as sin hath reigned unto *death*, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto *eternal life* by Christ Jesus our Lord."

How, one cannot but ask in sad astonishment, how could a belief so horrible—as that of the eternal torments of who can tell what a proportion of mankind—ever have sprung up and maintained itself in the bright shining of that lamp which the apostle was thus commissioned to hold aloft? Nay more—how could it from that very light derive its darkness? It is one of the mysteries of providence which we must be content to leave unsolved, I may say, untouched. Meanwhile we cling to God's truth—that death, in the plain sense which should not need to be argued for, is the penalty of His law. And thus, whether as bound to submit to the authority of God, or to employ for the understanding of His truth that reason for the use of which we are responsible, I am constrained to believe, as now represented, that "the wages of sin is most truly DEATH—while the gift of God is *eternal life* through Jesus Christ our Lord." But, as already intimated, I profess to know nothing of the *period* when this death is to find its consummation; nor do I for a moment suppose that there will be only one period for all transgressors.

As little do I know what suffering is to accompany the destroying process in this case or in that. I only see that God in His great law has attached to our sin a penalty which, when worked out to its proper issue, involves the end of the sin, and the end of the sinner. His purpose is to execute a judgment containing, as regards sin, a complete expression of His mind; and, as regards the sinner, a complete retribution for his rebellion—such a judgment as shall, by righteous excision, do away with the frightful necessity of eternally tormenting—ever punishing and punishing, but never having sufficiently punished—myriads upon myriads of immortal rebels. For, in the truest sense which the words can bear, will that judgment have its consummation in THE SECOND DEATH. God's words are all deep, but they are simple too. They always mean what they say, never the entire contrary of it. And just as surely as the penalty of the law has been executed in the death and destruction of the body, so will it be consummated where redeeming grace has not prevented, in the death and destruction of body and soul together. (Matt. x. 28.)

There is another view of law and penalty—as connected with what was said at the commencement of this chapter—which must not pass unnoticed. It is the idea that sin is its own punishment—just as the wrong handling of fire or poison is—from which is drawn the inference, that as soon as the sin is left, the punishment ceases? This, in fact, is the prescription of many a physician, the gospel of many a preacher—‘Cease from sin, and fear no more judgment.’ For after all, sin (as it is argued) is only the breach of a spiritual law, as any wrong bodily act or course is of a natural

law—and so the spiritual law, like the natural one, works out its own penalty in the internal disorder of the sinning soul—a disorder which may even be styled a death while it lasts—but which is infallibly healed by a return to obedience. And, to set the matter on the highest ground possible, it can easily be urged that such a consequence of wrong-doing is in either case a most real penalty—because a most real infliction of evil by the Author of all nature or being, physical and moral alike.

This analogy is, of course, valuable; inasmuch as the principle on which it rests is undoubtedly correct. God is the author of all nature; and whatever of evil comes on any of His creatures through neglect of His will—as it involves the operation of principles established by Himself—may therefore be rightly regarded as the punishment of sin. Still there remain behind two vital points open to the most serious disagreement.

(1) Where the end of sin is assumed to be the end of judgment. But is it so in the natural case? It must be a small matter indeed in which the consequence of a physical transgression ends with the transgression. Enough, that in ten thousand cases the consequence extends indefinitely beyond the cause—so much so, indeed, that there is no proportion between the act as an act, and the result as a result;—no halting-place, it may be, between the wrong act and the utter destruction of the agent. And thus it is contrary to all analogy (and analogy is invaluable here) to say that the judgment on account of sin must end with the sin. On the other hand, it is *according to all analogy* to believe that, as the natural law connects with fire or poison a real death, dissolution, end, of the body—so the spiritual

law may connect with sin an equally distinct, real, death and end of the soul. The thing, in short, is so far from being unreasonable that the contrary should not be so freely thrust upon us as the only view worthy of regard.

(2) While it is reasonable to believe that the action of divine law in the spiritual world will harmonize with what we find of it in the natural—it is not reasonable to confine this to the *internal* workings of the sinful mind. Nor, in fact, is it possible. For unless we deny that God is displeased with sin at all—it seems impossible to remove the thought and sense of His displeasure from the elements at work in the execution of the admitted penalty. Thus, the principle being granted, the only question will be as to the real amount of displeasure, and issue of the operation—a point which can be settled only by experience, or, in default of that, by revelation. But, instead of a divine displeasure—as something coming upon us from without, and entering into the elements of punishment—instead of this being a thing unnatural and unreasonable, it is just that which the analogy of nature irresistibly suggests as altogether probable. For is not God every day afflicting men by means of materials and influences of all sorts, physical and moral—ranging from thunderbolts and earthquakes to the thoughts and feelings of their neighbours—all external to themselves—and many of them far more apart from our own persons than His displeasure against sin can possibly be considered?

So much for the theory, that, with the end of the sin, there comes an end of the punishment—when tried by the principle on which it relies. And now as to the still more important test of Scripture and fact.

Let us allow, then, that as the fire and the poison may in the course of nature kill, and that, as the course of nature is simply the Creator's mode of action—therefore it may fairly be said that the Creator has cut off life by *means of them*. Yes, by *means of them*, but not *on account of them*; and it is just here that the analogy completely breaks down. For it is *not by means of sin*, but *on account of it*, that the Lawgiver inflicts death on the transgressor—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Was this death, then, to spring from a natural, deleterious operation, whether physical or moral, in the man's vitals, through his eating? or from the distinct judicial infliction of a threatened penalty? The language and the fact are equally decisive on the point. Or, when it is said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" was the dying thus threatened the natural result of the sin forbidden, or the result of a divine judgment—most contrary in multitudes of cases, to everything like nature—inflicting the most unlikely and unexpected death? So, if we ask what is meant by "the wages of sin is death," it is just as plain that a retribution is designed, as far as possible removed from a merely natural, that is, from any sort of physical or mental operation. It is nothing, in short, as springing up *within* the sinner, and proving death to him; it is something as coming upon him *from without*, and putting an end to him. It is true that spiritual death is a very bad inward state—a state in which the heart is without life, because without love; but it is also true that God has never threatened His creatures with the infliction of such a state—has never imposed moral evil as the penalty for sin. And—lest it should be said that the natural operation of sin is in

itself tantamount to penalty—I answer, No; for, in order to that, there must be nothing less than the Divine appointment of such operation with a view to the result. Thus, while it is doubly true that “to be carnally minded is death”—first, because it is to be without God; and, secondly, because it ends in the second death, or utter destruction; it is equally true that the second of these only is the real penalty of the sinfulness indicated—“*If ye live after the flesh, YE SHALL DIE.*”

And if such be the meaning of words, it is equally the meaning of those great facts by which God in His providence has from the first been expounding His own words. The inhabitants of the old world were not dying of their sins, when the flood came and destroyed them all; nor the men of Sodom, nor the people of Canaan, when judgment overtook them; nor any of the victims of the almost ceaseless process of destruction which the Old Testament records. Nor is there in sin anything, so far as we can trace it, to bring destruction upon the sinner—except, of course, that some sins work the ruin of the body with as much certainty as fire or poison does. But, generally speaking, what is there in sin to destroy? “When they shall say”—and apparently with the best of prospects—“Peace and safety, *then* sudden destruction cometh upon them”—yes, “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord,” at the very moment when their mountain stands strongest. What is there, in short, about sin, as regards its internal action, to deprive a man of immortality? By no kind of natural necessity does moral evil, as such, bring death upon the body. Much less should it, by any such law, destroy that body again when, after paying the debt of death, it is raised to life, and re-

united to its former companion for judgment. What, then, should cause the second death? What, in fact, of a natural kind should ever prevent the sorrow and the scandal of an immortal transgressor—of a creature eternally sinning and eternally suffering?—what but a direct act of excision, in the exercise of a Divine prerogative—a direct blotting of a name from the book of life? Those, indeed, who regard penalty in the loose manner now reflected on may be little in the habit of cherishing such thoughts as these. So much the worse for themselves and their system. Meanwhile they are ignoring a fundamental article in the government of God; and until they learn the place and value of that, they are not likely to see other things as the divine word presents them.

NOTE ON HUMAN LAW.

“A law,” says Austin,* “in the most general and comprehensive acceptation in which the term in its literal meaning is employed, may be said to be a rule laid down for the guidance of an intelligent being by an intelligent being having power over him.

“Every law or rule (taken with the largest signification which can be given to the term *properly*) is a *command*.

“If you express or intimate a wish that I shall do or forbear from some act, and if you will visit me with an evil in case I comply not with your wish, the *expression* or *intimation* of your wish is a *command*. A command is distinguished from other significations of desire, not by the style in which the desire is signified, but by the power and the purpose of the commanding party to inflict an evil or pain in case the desire be disregarded. If you cannot or will not harm me in case I comply not with your wish, the expression of your

* “Jurisprudence,” third edition, vol. i. pp. 88–94.

wish is not a command, although you utter your wish in imperative phrases. If you are willing and able to harm me in case I comply not with your wish, the expression of your wish amounts to a command, although you are prompted by a spirit of courtesy to utter it in the shape of a request.

"A command, then, is a signification of desire. But a command is distinguished from other significations of desire by this peculiarity: that the party to whom it is directed is liable to evil from the other, in case he comply not with the desire.

"Being liable to evil from you if I comply not with a wish which you signify, I am *bound* or *obliged* by your command, or I lie under a duty to obey it." [This implies, of course, a *right* to issue the command, often wanting in the human case, but never in the divine.] "If, in spite of that evil in prospect, I comply not with the wish which you signify, I am said to disobey your command, or to violate the duty which it imposes.

"The evil which will probably be incurred in case a command be disobeyed, or (which is the same) in case a duty be broken, is frequently called a *sanction* or an *enforcement* of *obedience*.

"It appears, then, that the ideas or notions comprehended by the term *command* are the following: (1) A wish or desire conceived by a rational being that another rational being shall do or forbear. (2) An evil to proceed from the former, and to be incurred by the latter, in case the latter comply not with the wish. (3) An expression or intimation of the wish by words or other signs.

"It also appears that *command*, *duty*, and *sanction*, are incessantly connected terms; . . . 'a wish conceived by one and expressed or intimated to another, with an evil to be inflicted and incurred in case the wish be disregarded' are signified directly and indirectly by each of the three expressions."

Such, we are told, is human law. It will be strange if there be nothing answering to it in the divine—strange if, in such a matter, the shadow should exceed the substance.

CHAPTER IV.

WORTHY OF DEATH.

HITHERTO we have considered the principle that all law involves a penalty, and the fact of *death* being *the* penalty attached by God's law to man's transgression. We have still to enquire into the reason of this connection. How comes it that such penalty is attached to such practice?

The question will be regarded by many as entirely beyond our province. Enough, it will be said, that it is so—but why it is we cannot tell. And if such be the case, then, of course, all further advance is needless. On the other hand, if Scripture testimony, together with the fair application of well-ascertained principles, concur in supplying a clear answer to the question—then the result cannot but be important, whether as regards divine law and government, or the gospel and redemption.

Does the Scripture, then, ask us to be content with the mere fact that death has been attached to sin by the Lawgiver? Or does it not conduct us some steps beyond this? For example, when it is taught that “the *righteousness* of God is revealed in the gospel,” as procuring for us salvation—is it not also taught that, antecedently to this, and as constituting the whole demand for it, “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven

against all man's *unrighteousness*"? (Rom. i. 17, &c.) There is a "*judgment of God*"—we are further told, after a very black recital of sins—"against them which do such things"—and, according to such judgment, transgressors are "*worthy of death.*" Thus we have not only the fact that they die, but the express statement that they deserve it, with the plain implication of the reason why. And this reason is, it seems, assumed as one not hard to discover. There is, in short, as very plainly intimated, a deep divine displeasure with the sins alluded to, and it is the working out of this that leads to, or it may be even constitutes, the death. So in the succeeding portion (ii. 1-16), the doer of evil, while spoken of as perishing, and as subject to the distress of an accusing conscience, is also represented as the object of "*indignation and wrath*"—as "*treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*"—which certainly involves a very awful experience of God's displeasure as coming out in the exercise of His righteousness. For, without now assuming what will be regarded as rather requiring proof, I must venture even here to refer to such language in what is the only sense that ever occurred to any one without a theory to serve.

To say that such expressions describe simply the unhappy workings of a mind disordered by sin is not to interpret, but to interrupt and contradict the Scripture in its plainest assertions.* How amazed would

* Thus it has been said—"The wrath that is to be atoned and pacified is, in its whole nature, nothing else but sin or disorder in the creature." "The work of atonement is nothing else but the altering or quenching that which is evil in the fallen creature (as water is the proper atonement of the rage of fire). Hell, wrath, darkness, misery, and eternal death mean the same thing through all Scripture; and

the apostle have been at such treatment of his language, as if it were possible to give two honest meanings to a question like this—"Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance (or, as the expression is, '*who inflicteth wrath*')"?—which surely means, if it means anything, that the wrath of God comes down upon man in the exercise of His righteousness. Thus by that does God shut every mouth, and declare the world guilty before Him. (iii. 19.) So inviolable, indeed, is this great attribute—so essential an element of His entire government, that He takes care to show that He is a *just God* even when "He justifies the ungodly." (iii. 26; iv. 5.) And when, in a world of sin, grace comes to reign, it is still "grace reigning through righteousness." (v. 21.) Or what is it but justice weighing all moral qualities in the most exact balances, when it is announced that "The wages of sin is death"? (vi. 23.) And again, when the apostle, detailing his first experience as an awakened sinner, speaks of "the commandment" indirectly becoming to him the road to death, he takes care to add that "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." (vii. 10, 12.) And all this is but a sample of the unbroken testimony of Scripture to that holiness of God through which He hates, and that righteousness in the exercise of which He punishes sin. If, in short, there was a lesson more earnestly instilled than another into the minds of Israel it was this. It was, in fact, the very basis plainly laid down for the whole work of redemption, that sin was these are the only things from which we want to be redeemed. That wrath which wants the atonement of the sufferings, blood, and death of Christ is no other than that sin or sinful state in which we are naturally born."—See Law's '*Spirit of Love*,' in Bishop Ewing's '*Present Day Papers*,' No. 1, pp. 47-51.

a thing most hateful to God—the doer of it being regarded as guilty, and deserving of death.

Prudential reasons—to use an expression which will be sufficiently understood—there might be for punishing sin; but they were certainly secondary, and they are not much put forward in the Bible. It was of consequence, doubtless, that the divine character should be kept clear of all apparent complicity with evil in the view of spectators, and therefore, of course, it was important that sin should be punished. But yet this is not the view of the matter that the Scripture presents. Even man is expected to do right, without asking whether he will be misunderstood or not. Much more will the blessed God do right, in the certainty that the consequences will be right too. If sin does not on its own account deserve punishment, no false view is given by not punishing it. If it does deserve punishment, then there is reason enough for the infliction, independently of its bearings on the general interests of the universe. The question, in fact, is an extremely simple one. It is just this—Does man, according to the Scripture view of the matter, receive from God what is *personally his due*, or, instead of this, something else which may operate to the most advantage on the moral universe generally? The answer, surely, is that man is always represented as getting what he himself deserves, and *this* it is which is expected to tell with most effect upon other minds. Or the question may be put thus. Is God the lawgiver of the *individual* or only of the *mass*? If of the individual, then for him the law has its penalty in strict reserve—whatever his relation to his fellow-creature, near or far off. If not of the individual, then how of two, or three, or ten thousand individuals? how of the

world at all? So hard it is to account for the punishment of a sinner, except on the plain Scriptural ground that he is "worthy of it"—and that thus divine justice inflicts it—weighing out to him death as the exact wages of his evil doing.

Thus, then, I should feel constrained to repudiate the theory of what has been called "Public Justice," or a regard to the rights of the moral universe generally, as *the proper ground* of the punishment of sin—the one ground, in short, on which, according to some, it can ever be justified. For it is much to be feared that, if only thus it can be justified, it cannot well be justified at all. The rights of the *Lawgiver* one can well understand, and also the desert of a *subject* in "receiving according to his deeds;" but what rights the *universe* has in such a matter it is hard to see. If the individual as such is "worthy of death," that is, if he deserves the punishment—then his punishment is right, and needs no other explanation. But if, as an individual, he deserves no punishment, then how can it be right to inflict it on him *for the benefit of others*? What benefit can it be to the world generally to see any individual or company subjected to punishment, not because it is deserved—nay more, to a punishment which is really not deserved—but which is inflicted solely to make a salutary impression? How, in a word, can a punishment ever make the right impression on the beholder, but just because it is, and because he knows that it is, the right thing as done to the transgressor.*

So far, then, we seem to have got, in deference to the plain authority of Scripture, combined with the applica-

* See at the end of this chapter the view now reflected on as given in Gilbert's Congregational Lecture on the 'Atonement.'

tion of principles which appear both simple and sound. But there must be some further connection between the action of justice and the punishment of sin. Without trespassing, then, on the ground of the unrevealed—but confining ourselves to the merest first principles as connected with what *is* revealed—let us see if we cannot get some light on the question, why God has attached such a penalty to His law; or, in other words, such a punishment to sin.

Now, such light, I argue, springs up from considering in what relation a transgressor, of necessity, stands to the divine holiness and justice.

That God in the exercise of His holiness is displeased with sin, and hates it, cannot be questioned. This, in short, is *the very idea* that we have of Him as a holy Being, in connection with sin. With His own nature and law He is essentially well pleased. With sin, or rather the sinner—for without the agent the act is nothing—as opposed to that nature and law, He is proportionally ill pleased. Such was the impression made on the prophet as he listened to the seraphim shouting the praise of the thrice Holy—"Woe is me," cried he, "for I am undone!" How, indeed, a being of Almighty power, and perfectly holy principle, should ever have permitted to arise that unholiness which He hates is another question, and one which we may quietly leave unanswered during our stay here—to say nothing of hereafter. So hopeless, in short, is the riddle, that one can scarcely wonder to see some, in the true spirit of Pantheism or fatalism, cutting the knot by denying at once that there can be such a thing as real moral evil—anything actually hateful to God. For my part, having the plainest evidence that a holy God has been sinned

against by His creature man, I am obliged in submission to accept the fact, and devoutly leave in His hands the knot which I cannot loose and dare not cut. Yes, a holy God has been sinned against—and He cannot but be exceedingly displeased with the sin which presents so entire a contrast to all that He is, and all that can approve itself to Him. What, then, is to become of this displeasure? Shall it be shut up and hid away in the depths of His own mind, and be just as if it were not—while His voice shall all the time speak, and His face smile, and He act toward the sinner *as if He were not displeased*? This last is plainly out of the question. It would be dishonesty, pretence, impossible. The Holy One must express what He feels. But it is displeasure that He feels. Displeasure, then, He must express. And if the feeling be right, the utterance of it cannot be wrong. Nay more; God *may make the sinner personally feel what He feels towards him*. For is it right that the great Governor should feel a certain displeasure towards His rebellious subject?—then (and this I take for a first principle in the matter) He may properly make the creature feel, in so far as his created capacity will allow, the actual displeasure entertained towards him. Will not this too be right? Is it not precisely what the creature deserves? Then it will be the award of justice; for, except this, we can have no idea of what justice is—namely, the treating of others according as they deserve. And how can my conscience dispute such a decision as this, that God shall act out in regard to me the feeling which He is entitled to entertain towards me? But if the feeling as entertained be simply another word for divine *holiness*, then the working out of it towards the sinner is nothing but the action of divine

justice. The one will be the exact *impression*, and the other the equally exact *expression*, of God's mind in regard to sin. It will be a real punishment for sin; for it will be suffering as inflicted directly on account of it—inflicted in execution of the penalty originally attached to the law which has been now broken. And it will, as we have seen, present throughout the strong features of the strictest righteousness.

Will it, then, be *death*, as well as punishment and suffering? To attempt the settlement of such a matter by mere reasoning would surely be to exceed the limits of sound thought. But if we will very earnestly enquire of our conscience—taking care that it be thoroughly awake and enlightened—we shall be much more likely to reach the truth. Be it so, however, that reason comes short, and that conscience may hesitate to conclude that the Divine displeasure involves an actual death, there is, in regard to God's own sentence, at least, no short-coming and no indecision;—"In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die;"—"The wages of sin is death;"—"Sin hath reigned unto death;"—"They that do such things are worthy of death." Such is the positive information—the high authority which supplements the deficiency of all other means of discovery. And the result of it is this, that now the divine voice has announced in thunder what reason might not have distinctly seen, and conscience might only have tremblingly suspected—namely, that God cannot bring out His whole displeasure against a sinner, without bringing down a real death upon the sinner's head. Such is the measure of the holy feeling that has to be expressed. Such is the divine thought that has to be translated into action. "The righteous Lord

loveth righteousness"—yes, loves it to such a degree as to take it and the doer of it into direct fellowship with Himself. He loves it, if we may so speak, into partnership with His own blessedness and immortality. The same righteous One hates unrighteousness; He hates it so as to drive it from His company—hates it out of its very being. And this hatred of it He can only accomplish by that death of the evil-doer of which His law makes mention. Thus as His favour is in every sense life, His disfavour is in every sense *death*.*

Does all this seem very hard and dreadful? Very dreadful it is, as the whole working of sin undoubtedly

* Dr. Pye Smith argues about this in a way that deserves remark (see "Four Discourses," third ed. pp. 191-193). He represents that, man being a sinner, only these results seem possible—viz., 1. That God by an act of omnipotence deprive him of existence. 2. That the Law be altered and abated. 3. That the proper effects of sin fall upon the sinner. 4. That some compensative resource be adopted. Against the *first* of these, he urges (1) "We have no evidence from experiment, analogy, or revelation, that God ever has annihilated any being which He had brought into existence, material or spiritual; or that He ever will do so. All known facts in natural history, and all analogies from facts, support the reverse of this supposition."

My answer is—Instead of 'annihilate', read 'destroy', and then you may turn the whole *negative* into the most decided *positive*. For experiment and analogy, nature, fact, and revelation, all join in proclaiming *destruction* to be one of the most possible and notorious things in the world.

He objects (2) "The supposition implies that absolute power might be employed to counteract the demands of justice; which could be no other than making arbitrary will, or mere force, to be superior to the claims of rectitude and wisdom." Certainly, it would be contrary to the demands of justice to withhold immortality from a sinner, if justice had ever required that the sinner should be immortal. But how it should conflict with justice for the Creator and Proprietor to *destroy*, when He had given no pledge, or hint, to the contrary, does not appear. Such a style of arguing in such a man may serve as some test of the cause which he had to defend.

is—whether in the individual or in society—in this world or the world to come. But hard it certainly is not—so soon as the fact of sin, genuine sin against God, is honestly admitted. The idea of the Almighty Governor refusing to let the sinner really die, but maintaining him by resistless power in all the horrors of a sinful and wretched immortality—this, I grant, would be quite another matter. Such a thing *may* be counted hard as well as dreadful. But it is death for which we plead. And we can only see such a judgment as “overflowing with righteousness.” For sin, as we understand it, means something in the rebel heart, crying, ‘Let God not be.’ And to our mind there seems only an exact retribution in the answer, ‘Let the sinner not be!’ It is war, an unrighteous war, put down, and crushed out, by a righteous one. If it be a fearful thing thus to contemplate the view of God in all His holiness, justice, and power—the view of such a God as *against man*—I can only see it as the righteous counterpart of the invariably antecedent picture of man as *against God*. And if the one be *death* in its truest and fullest sense, the other is nothing more than *sin* in its real and genuine meaning.

Thus we are helped to understand how sin should bring death. And thus, while reason might have declined giving an opinion as to *how much* of penalty should be attached to the law—and conscience, if strictly questioned, would probably have answered, ‘Death’—the Judge Himself has anticipated all reasonings and all doubtings on the matter, and has signified to the human family, at least once before its transgression, and times innumerable since, that “THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH.”

Is it needful to add that all this is as far removed

as possible from anything like malevolence on the part of God towards His creatures? In that case there had been no divine smile upon man since Adam sinned. Then had God's voice of mercy been silent until now. And then, as He had the power, so He must have had the will, to keep man in a state of unmitigated suffering from the day of the first sin—until when? No, God's holy displeasure against sin does not mean malevolence towards the sinner. And if justice required the actual, honest, complete expression of what was in the thrice holy mind, it was for its own sake, or rather for the sake of the Holy One Himself, that it required it—not for the sake of making human beings wretched. This was not the *satisfaction that justice sought*. Then, as already intimated, its delight had been to punish, and punish, and punish—but how long no mind can conceive. As to proposals from *Love* or *Mercy*, a justice like this must have scorched them out of being. But now, if we can see that all the satisfaction ever sought by divine justice lies not in making creatures unhappy, but simply in the necessary acting out of the essential holiness of the divine character—in the making felt by the creature of what is felt towards him by the Creator—and that even this has its fullest consummation and utmost limit in the *death*, or everlasting *destruction* of the rebel—if we can see this, we can also see how God may, in the exercising and satisfying of His great justice, be most truly A CONSUMING FIRE—while yet He may at the same time present Himself as LOVE—if only there shall be the means of reconciling the relations and actings of the “*Just God*” and the “*Saviour*.” Such was the problem; and, allowing it to be solved, there can be nothing in the most absolute

justice to beget despair of redemption. But the solution of the problem—*that* was the task. The reconciliation of the justice which had said, “Thou shalt *die*,” with a mercy coming to say ‘*Live*’—*there* was the difficulty. And, till God undertook to deal with it, it was desperate indeed.

NOTE ON PUBLIC JUSTICE.

“Justice, as a binding power (says Gilbert),* has reference to the faithful granting what is due in the form of a benefit, but not as absolutely binding to inflict merited evil.” “Let the interest be exclusively confined betwixt the two parties, the powerful Governor, and the individual culprit, and let it be absolutely clear that the criminal himself would derive no moral benefit from the discipline, and it will follow that justice will not insist upon the penalty. Without any violation of right an unrestricted pardon may issue.” [Why not *will* issue?] “We arrive, therefore, without ambiguity, at the conclusion that relative justice, or that of a public character, is *goodness regulated by the decisions of wisdom*.” “We have sinned against God as an individual Being, since He has an inalienable claim to our service; but our sin is also against the well-being of all intelligent moral agents, whose rights as the Supreme Governor it is His office to protect, and for the defence and vindication of which He is essentially the executive power. In the former—in his individual relation—the great God, with illustrious clemency, freely forgives, foregoes His claim” [but if under this character He cannot punish, where is the ‘clemency,’ or the ‘free forgiving’? and if his ‘claim’ be ‘*inalienable*,’ how can he forego it?] “and pities the criminal; it is in the latter (character) only, in the name of public law, instituted and to be sustained for the public safety, and of whose awards He is, not merely by

* Lecture as above. See pp. 174, 221–235, 272, 357, 363, 377.

delegation, but originally and necessarily, the executive power—in this character only, that He either exacts the penalty, or receives the ransom.” [Yes, but in what character does He *impose* the penalty? Is He not Lawgiver of the *individual*; and does not the giving of law involve the imposing of penalty? And this the author himself admits when he says below, ‘Law is nothing without either penalties or substitution.’] “The meaning and the only meaning of the act (God’s giving up His Son) is that, while He saves the sinner, He cannot but attest His hatred of the sin.” “By sin the Supreme Being is emphatically the *pars laesa*, and in that character He might doubtless inflict punishment” [and yet this has been expressly argued against by the writer], “but this to the penitent He freely remits, frankly forgives the whole debt, and becomes the glorious exemplar of pardoning justice.” [If, then, He thus in His individual character pardons and seemingly *must* pardon the *penitent*, what becomes of His treatment under that character of the *impenitent*? May He pardon, or must He punish *him*?] “The divine Governor, in short, punishes sin, and forbids mercy to be exercised absolutely, without an adequate indemnity against the complicated influences of temptation . . . yet it must not be inferred that, because the goodness of God is such that He does not *punish to avenge* personal wrongs, therefore He possesses no right to do so. If He foregoes no right He shows no mercy.” [And thus it appears after all that it would not be incompetent that the great Governor should, even in His individual character, “punish to avenge *personal wrongs*.” He ‘possesses,’ we are told, after all ‘a right to do so.’ Let me just ask, then, whether—either admitting or denying this last all-important principle—we can imagine that it would be unfit for the Creator of all to say to one of His creatures as such, ‘In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,’ with the simple determination to inflict the penalty as pronounced?]

CHAPTER V.

DOES REPENTANCE ENSURE PARDON?

TRUE, it may be said—pursuing, from another point of view, the objection last considered—sin brings punishment, and punishment suffering; therefore cease from the sin, and you put an end to the suffering. Return to God by repentance, and instantly God returns to you in mercy. “‘Be reconciled to Me’—that is the command—there is God’s forgiveness.”* For, since we know that God has nothing against us but our sin, then, so soon as we put away that, He has nothing against us at all.

Now, I freely grant that much may be said for such a view. It can plead the analogy of many social transactions; it can quote not a few passages from the Old Testament which seem to favour it; and even in the New Testament there are portions which, taken by themselves, would naturally wear the same aspect—notably, the parable of the prodigal, and the narrative of the “woman who was a sinner.” Leaving these for the present, let us give attention to the truly vital point of the connection between repentance and pardon.

Assuming, then, as a matter sufficiently certain, that death is the penalty connected with the divine law,

* J. Ll. Davies, “*Work of Christ*,” p. 77. The passage will be given below.

there arises the question—Is it sin simply as *committed*, or only as *continued* in, that calls down the penalty? The difference is of the last moment; and the question not so unworthy of attention as some may imagine. Thus, on one side, the ready answer will be, that it is only sin as *continued* in which brings death. Many, on the other hand, will refuse to hear of any distinction between *commission* and *continuance*, when the connection between law and penalty is the thing in question. And yet there may be a distinction. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die”—there is law and penalty; while plainly, it is not absolute sinning that is spoken of, but sin as continued in, and that of a very palpable kind. It is the sin of one who has omitted all the great duties incumbent on an Israelite, and has committed and continued in all the contrary offences. “He shall not live, he shall surely die.” But yet, let there be no mistake, the prophet intimates; such a man shall not die for his father’s sin; nor shall his son die for his sin; but each man for his own. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” This is the lesson. And yet even such a one, we are informed, may escape the consequences of his evil ways. “When the wicked turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.” (Ezek. xviii. 4–27.) Here, then, surely enough, is law, with its determinate penalty; and yet that penalty may be averted by *repentance*. Thus it was plainly sin, as *continued* in, that was, in this case, to bring down the death. For there was no question here about men being simply sinners. “There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not;”—“If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall

stand?" Thus measured, no Israelite could plead that "he was just and should surely live." The question, in short, was entirely one of public administration, not of judgment on account of private sin. It was a statement of the terms on which the people of Israel might expect to be dealt with, as to a miserable excision, on the one hand, or a happy continuance in their land, on the other. It is the very same administration, with its inevitable consequences, which the prophet had detailed in a previous portion (ch. iii.), when, expounding the watchman's duty—as that which, performed or neglected, should lead to results so palpable, in the way of life or death, whether to himself or to his people. It is, in short, that "righteousness of the law which Moses describes, saying, That the man that doeth those things shall live by them." (Lev. xviii. 5; Rom. x. 5.) And if there was in the Christian church one who might have been expected to sympathize with such a system, it was the very man who thus referred to Moses. And yet this man could only set up in direct contrast to everything of the kind that other righteousness which was *his* hope. Enough if, at present, we can see on what principle the old covenant penalty is generally dealt out—namely, for certain manifest sins, and those as unrepented of. At the same time there is no reason why we should ignore that bloodshedding to which the Israelite's attention was being constantly directed, as an essential condition for the actual removal of his sin, in order to his being accepted before the Lord.

Thus we see that the case, as propounded by the prophet, is of a mixed and even complicated character, and very far from sufficient to settle the question with which we are now occupied. Continuance in sin is one

of the elements of the case on the one side, and repentance on the other; but these are far from being so pure and simple as to supply a steady light on the subject of *our* pardon and acceptance.

For now to come to our own case, let us begin with the very popular view, that the death-penalty is merely the *unhappy condition* attaching to a *continuance in sin*—the sinful soul being never really ‘cut off,’ but continuing in its evil-doing and separation from God, while the penalty lasts—such continuance and such penalty being, in fact, identical. Taken thus, it is plain what follows. For, then, of course, a thorough repentance, or ceasing from sin, however brought about, would put an end to the death—just as a ceasing from certain bodily actions may possibly put an end to the disease or suffering which the acts have given rise to. But then, observe, in such a case there is no room for *pardon*. For what is pardon but just—‘I will not punish you, or cause you to suffer for your offence, as I might justly do’? ‘Yes’ (I hear it said) ‘there is, in our view, room for pardon; for if God *was* displeased with the transgressor, and *is* pleased with the penitent, and gives him to enjoy His favour and love, that surely is to pardon his sins.’ ‘Very far from it indeed,’ I answer. ‘It might be so with us in various respects; but it does not therefore follow that it may be so, much less must be so, with God. For example, I am a parent or an employer, and my son or servant has behaved badly, rendering himself unworthy of being continued in my house or service; a separation takes place, and without confession there can be no reunion; the offender repents; I *forgive* him all, and restore him to his posi-

tion.* But then, observe, this does not meet the case; the offender has treated me badly, but he has transgressed no law of mine, and I am not entitled, much less required, to punish him. To meet our case, on the other hand, we must find a different illustration. We must suppose some one in authority—to whose law with its penalty we are subject—and whom we have grievously disobeyed and offended. Such a one, then, as he may justly punish, so he cannot pardon without remitting a penalty. “I might justly punish you, but I will not”—this is *his* attitude; this it is which constitutes pardon in *him*. I say nothing, you observe, about the terms of the pardon—nothing about satisfaction to justice in any way. I say simply what *pardon means* in such a case. Be it as free as you please—without any compensation, of course, for the injury done; be it even without repentance, if you will; yet this alone is pardon—“I might punish you, but I will not.” Now this, in any given case, may be wise or foolish; it may even be right or wrong; that has nothing to do with the question as to what pardon is—a question of vital moment in regard to the whole gospel of God. It is easy, indeed, to speak of it as only a thing of words. Perhaps so; but the world is managed by words; and by words God reveals Himself to us;

* And this is continually given as a sufficient view of the whole matter. Thus—“In the case of our own children, we feel that the law is honoured sufficiently by their cessation from rebellion, that the barrier between us and them is removed by the words, ‘I will arise, and go to my father,’ and that an offering or compensation for their sins, so far from pleasing, would offend and alienate us, and that we require nothing to be done by ourselves to warrant our acceptance of them. Joy and praise are all that can have place on either side.”—Bishop Ewing, “Present Day Papers,” Introduction, p. 43.

and if words lose their meaning in matters like these, then does there spring up a confusion more dreadful than ever reigned in Babel. Nor can it be any good symptom of a religious system when it shows itself unable or unwilling to tell us plainly what the pardon of sin by the great God means. Those to whom I allude speak seldom perhaps of pardon—and yet they do speak of it—for there is no point which they decline to handle; but they speak hesitatingly, and ambiguously, and variably; so that it is extremely difficult to understand what they mean. They say, and then they seem to unsay; they appear to go along with us, and then to explain that they do not; they affirm, but it is in some modified sense; they deny, but it is under some peculiar reserve—one very common practice being to admit apparently what is held on the other side, but with important additions, as they urge, and not in that very partial way in which they represent it as being held; while yet the whole strength of the case is made to consist in the additions, which after all are ours as thoroughly as theirs.

The following may be taken as a slight specimen of the style and sentiments to which I allude:—"Put aside resolutely the unworthy notion that God's forgiveness—the pardon spoken of when it is said that 'Jesus Christ washed us from our sins in His own blood'—can *mean, simply, the remitting of a legal penalty* which we have incurred."

Now it would seem as if the writer here intended to express his belief that—while pardon *includes* the remission of a legal penalty—it does not "simply mean" that, but *something more*. Whereas his belief certainly is that it *excludes* such an idea altogether. Again, it is

unfair to quote the expression, "washed us from our sins," &c., as if we took that for a mere pardon. There is probably not one evangelical expositor who so regards it. "He brought (so the passage continues) the warm life-giving stream of the Father's forgiveness to flow on the cold and polluted barrenness of the human heart." It may be so, and yet this does not tell us what forgiveness *is*, and primarily *does*, as it virtually undertakes to do. It is, in fact, one of the 'additions' alluded to above. "Be reconciled to me; there is God's forgiveness" [that is to say, our change of mind towards God, and nothing more, *that* is forgiveness]. "There we read the *meaning* and the *purpose* of the pardon of our sin. God's forgiveness does not conquer us, does not reach us, until we are restored to Him, and have entered into His favour; and then, where, let me ask, is the place for sin?"

Truly enough, God's forgiveness does not spiritually and practically conquer us, till we are restored to Him. For then it is that it effectually operates upon us. Does it therefore follow that it does not *reach* us before that? and above all, does not reach us *till* we *have entered into His favour*? What if our old belief be both more comfortable and more reasonable, that God's forgiveness takes us up when rebels, and *brings us into His favour*? But, be this as it may, we are here informed of something still more startling. Forgiveness, we are told, conquers us, reaches us, at a certain stage; but then, at that stage, *there is no place for sin*. What, then, does forgiveness do for us—reaching us, as it does, only at a stage where there is, it seems, nothing left for it to do? And yet this is intended as an express statement of "the *meaning* and *purpose* of the pardon of our sins!"

Here is something which we are expected to *understand* and *believe*. What if we can do neither! Once more, "The further we enter into the gospel, we shall find less satisfaction in making any distinction between the *pardon* of our sin and practical *deliverance* from it." This is more intelligible; but then it is very much like saying that pardon is not that kind of thing which the world has always understood it to be. For the world *has* certainly been in the habit of recognizing a very wide distinction between "the *meaning* and the *purpose* of pardon." The understood 'meaning' has always been the remitting of some penalty, or unpleasant consequence of sin—this depending simply on the pardoning act. As to the 'purpose,' that belongs entirely to the mind of the pardoner, and may take effect, or the contrary, on the mind of the pardoned.*

Now surely, Christian truth should not be so intricate a matter as this. It must have been intended for satisfactory explanation, and distinct understanding. Many, of course, will demur to this, and plead that mere truth or doctrine was never much intended for the intellect, but chiefly for the affections. If such were the view given of it by those who take the other side on this question, our objections would be different. But it is not so. If we seek to explain and instruct, so do they; if we appeal to the understanding, and endeavour to set before our fellows the exact meaning of God's revelation, so do they. Yes, and here is just the very source of the confusion which we complain of. There is, first, an accepted book to be explained; and then, together with that there is a fondly cherished belief to

* For the above extracts see J. Ll. Davies, "Work of Christ," pp. 76-78.

be defended. Hence, the result with which we are familiar. I repeat, then, that to pardon—to pardon any act of real *transgression*, is freely to refrain from punishing when justly you might punish. But, according to the view on which we are reflecting, there is no room for anything of the kind. Allow that a displeasure which lasts while an offence lasts is a real punishment, yet all occasion for such punishment ends with repentance. There is the same reason for being pleased with the present goodness as there was for being displeased with the former badness. You *could not* justly punish in such a case; therefore you *cannot* really pardon. There is no room, according to the principle assumed, for anything but satisfaction with the other party. Nay more, there is no room, as far as I can see, for either governor or lawgiver in the case. Any one with a correct moral appreciation of things, though destitute of all authority, will equally feel displeased with the bad, and pleased with the good. Nor will it in the least advance us towards the true idea of pardon, if we even suppose that God, in the exercise of His goodness, has so acted upon the transgressor as to convert the evil disposition, which originally displeased Him, into the good one which pleases Him now. That is no more a matter of pardon than when any one greatly denies himself, for the sake of healing the diseases, or improving the morals, of his fellows. It is no more pardon than if a father should say to his child, If you go there and fall down, you will both injure yourself and distress me:—and then, when the child has done it, should run to heal the wound, and think no more about it. Extend, if you will, the father's act from the body to the mind of the child, still there is

nothing more of pardon in it. And thus it may be a serious mistake to teach that, as sin alone brings the divine displeasure, so repentance alone ensures the end of punishment. For such a theory may involve the end not only of all punishment, but of all grace and of all law.

But now, leaving our own thoughts and theories—liable as these always are to some unsuspected, but fatal, flaw—let us see whether the Scripture will allow us to believe that the punishment of sin already committed may certainly be got quit of simply by repentance.

Take, then, the very unencumbered case of the first prohibition, with its penalty—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Shall we say here that Adam, in eating of the tree, becomes dissatisfied with God, and displeasing to Him—the human and the divine thus coming into conflict—this of itself being the death threatened, as the punishment of sin;—while yet the death is turned into life, as soon as man by repentance returns to the bosom of his Father, believing His love, and accepting the favour which had never for a moment been interrupted? Is this the view that we are to take of it? And do we profess that such a view is in harmony with the revealed arrangement? Let us see—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This seems plain and peremptory. Transgression is to bring death, and that at once. It seems as if nothing could be more clearly unconditional. For where do we find the shadow of a hint, or the least room for an idea like this—'Except thou repent of the deed, thou shalt die and not live; for disobedience certainly is,

and brings death; whereas obedience equally is, and brings life'? The thing, in short, is as absolute as can be conceived. Obedience or disobedience—that was the question, not repentance or impenitence. And on the first of these alternatives, not at all upon the second, specious as it may seem, was the issue suspended.

And if such be the principle, how stands the fact? Did not the man actually die for that very transgression? It is to be hoped, indeed, that, however impenitent and presumptuous at the first, he did truly repent long before the end; but that prevented not the end from coming. The transgressor died at last. Yes, and he died at once. Just as the toil and sweat, the trials and sorrows, the thorns and thistles, and other fruits of the curse came at once—so death began its work at once, although it took more than nine hundred years to complete it. For, surely, to lose immortality—to come under an irreversible death-penalty—to enter upon the road of which the one end was death—this was no indistinct fulfilment of the word, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Thus were law and penalty connected in regard to the bodily life of the first transgressor. And how as to the soul? This, without being a less certain, is a more complicated matter. For already, on the very day of transgression, the shadow of redemption falls upon the shut up garden; and the tree of life continues there, as if to proclaim that man might still cherish the hope of in some way returning and eating. But of repentance as the means of his restoration there is no whisper. All that we can *see* is the spectacle of the man's soul entering upon the same road, and making for the same end, as his body. For if death was threatened not to a

part, but to the *person* of the transgressor—then under death is the whole man lying, and to death is he hastening. What the human family would now have been but for the destined appearance of the woman's seed to bruise the head of him that had the power of death—is no question for us. Enough if we can understand what the law meant when it said, "Thou shalt surely die."*

Leaving now the Old Testament to throw its own light upon what it meant by 'dying,' we may look again for a moment at a sentence in the New, very conclusively summing up the whole doctrine whether of Christ, or His apostles, on the subject—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Does it not seem, then, as if we had here an accomplished fact? The evil has been done; the consequence of it has been declared; man has missed, or failed of reaching—he has forfeited, he has lost, the glory of God, or the life eternal. But what is the value of a declaration so decisive and judicial, if, after all, we have only to cease from our sinning, so as to undo its consequences? Can we venture to reason thus?—"True, the penalty of death is as distinctly there as ever was a penalty anywhere; we are certainly said to have done a thing which has cut us off from life; but let us even now retrace our steps, and, with repentance, there comes at once the reversal of the sentence; yes, and that was

* Here is a view of the death-penalty which carries out with rigid consistency the modern doctrine—"Who among us would cast the blame upon a father who had warned his child against eating certain pleasant-looking but poisonous fruit? If, after being carefully cautioned, the child died from the effects of the noxious fruit, who would cast the blame at the father's door?"—"Words for things," in Bishop Ewing's *Present Day Papers*.

the very meaning of the Judge when He pronounced the sentence; He meant us all along to understand that the only death threatened by Him is the unhappy state of mind involved in our impenitence—which being cut short by faith in divine love, and earnest return to our duty, the death also is cut short, and life and glory are ours again!’ Can we venture, I ask, thus to reason? For, if so, it will lead to a strange view of any of the divine calls to repentance as combined with offers of mercy. Hitherto, we have always regarded mercy as a thing of grace, not of debt—believing that the divine Sovereign can truly pardon only where He may justly punish. But now such an idea will need correction; for we shall be driven to reason thus—‘Seeing that the law, by its penalty, only means this—that, so long as we sin, so long we suffer death—then, by ceasing to sin we cease to suffer; we cease to be liable for any penalty at all; and hence, as God has no longer anything to punish, so neither has He anything to pardon. Nay, it is manifest that He never was in a position to pardon. For He can only pardon, it seems, when, and in so far as, we repent; from which it follows that, as pardon cannot act before repentance, so after repentance there is nothing for it to do!’

And this is what comes from retaining the letter of the divine word in connection with some discordant theory of our own. But if, on the other hand, we can see that this will not do, we are shut up to the conclusion that, through sin, we have incurred a penalty which no repentance can annul. Thus shall we understand that when pardon is promised to the penitent (“Let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him”), there is a very different principle at work from

that of *the necessary cessation of punishment with the cessation of sin*. For this, as we see, would not be pardon. What, then, can be the principle involved but just that great redemption, on the provision of which the whole of the thrilling exhortation was based—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" &c. ? (*cf.* Isa. lv. and liii.)

Or, when the Redeemer at length appears, proclaiming divine love and mercy, is it right to ignore, in regard to any of His special teachings, the very work for which He came into the world? Explain it as we will, He came to "die for our sins!" and by this means it is, whatever the mode of it, that pardon comes to us. Such, assuredly, is the truth; but it is a truth assumed, not asserted in the cases alluded to; and for the manifest reason that the Saviour's object in those cases was to present the *result*, not the *mode* of His mediation.

Thus, take the parable of the prodigal, and what was its object? It was to show the murmuring Pharisees how Jesus really did "receive sinners," and how His Father received them, and all heaven rejoiced at the event. At the same time, there was in such a view no room for the doctrine of propitiation; no room even for the divine character of lawgiver; and no room therefore for the direct expression of that truth without which even pardon is unintelligible. But the needful truth was told; the needful view was presented; and meanwhile, all else could be left in its own place by One who was too conscious of His position to be in the habit of asserting it without necessity. Enough, in short, as regards this grand parable, if the Speaker made it plain that there was now an open door to the Father's bosom for every publican and sinner in the world.

Or, take the case of the two debtors—"When they had nothing to pay, He frankly forgave them both." What then!—are we forgiven without even repentance? So think some—*because the parable says nothing about it.* This is one extreme—the fallacy of which is apparent. Nor less serious is the fallacy of the other extreme, that we are forgiven without any atonement, because of that there is nothing in the parable. Atonement without repentance is a mistake indeed; and repentance without atonement is one no less serious! But such surely is not the lesson even of this parable. It is true that there is no mention of atonement, but there is such a view conveyed of the relation of the two parties as leaves ample room for it. For see the position of these debtors—see how they have neither done, nor have had done to them, anything which at all alters their relation to the creditor;—they may bitterly regret their misfortunes or their follies, and may sincerely purpose never to get into debt again; yet still their position is the same, they have nothing to pay; and for their debt and its consequences they are strictly liable. It is in this position that "He frankly forgives them both"—He freely remits that for which He might rightly hold them bound. He says, 'I might punish you, but I will not;' and thus He *forgives*. Does this seem like what took place? But then it is something extremely different from the forgiveness which we are now so confidently asked to believe in. And so when the Saviour, applying His own parable, declares to the woman, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," can we have any doubt as to how she would interpret the blessing? Would she consider that, in leaving her sins, she had—according to the natural and necessary course of divine arrangement—equally

left judgment and punishment behind? Is this the way in which she would sympathize with a fellow-sinner declaring—"If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared"? (Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.)

Or, the case of the publican. He certainly was a genuine penitent; and, according to the doctrine on the other side, his repentance, as dissociating him from sin and death, should equally and at once have associated him with God and life, and so have brought him the peace and happiness which he craved. But it was far otherwise. His repentance seems only to add to his anguish; for it cannot, as he too certainly feels, put away either his sins or his fears. And so, there he stands, with downcast eyes, dreading the punishment which he has provoked, and not daring to draw near—but crying out, as he keeps beating upon his breast, "Lord be propitiated to me * the sinner;" the end of it all being that "he went down to his house JUSTIFIED."

Let these cases suffice. But they are not the only ones which show that peace is neither announced to men on the ground of their repentance, nor comes na-

* The publican's expression (ἱλάσθητι) is the same as, "*Purge away our sins*" (Ps. lxxix. 9, Sept.), corresponding to the regular Hebrew phrase for 'cover over,' or 'atone for,' which will be considered below. So, in passages which will illustrate the sense in which the Scripture speaks of pardon, we have the same Greek answering to the same Hebrew—as, "Thou shalt *purge them away*" (Ps. lxxv. 3); "He being full of compassion *for gave* their iniquity, and destroyed them not." (Ps. lxxviii. 38.) "Be merciful . . . and lay not innocent blood to their charge, and the blood shall be *forgiven* them" (Deut. xxi. 8); "May the good Lord *pardon*" (2 Chron. xxx. 18); "When I am pacified towards thee (in my *pardoning* or *covering over* for thee) as regards all that thou hast done." (Ezek. xvi. 63.)

turally as the fruit of it. And yet if penalty and death, repentance and life, were what we find them as described by those on the other side, it surely ought to be so. I am not going, of course, upon their explicit descriptions of these things; for it is in regard to explicitness that they peculiarly fail. I am simply taking their principle, and endeavouring fairly to apply it. And, if repentance be the thing which their system makes it, then the penitent ought to fare differently from what we find him do either in the Bible, or the world. It is no answer to tell us that men do not know, till they are informed, of the loving reception, with all its peace and pardon, which their Father is ready to accord to them; inasmuch as this very manifestation of God, with all its brightness, love, and power, was just the object of the Redeemer's appearance, and therefore cannot be known independently of that. It is to no purpose, I say, to plead this. For if repentance were the thing which it is represented as being—if it altered the relation of the sinner to his God in the way alleged—then the repenting man would know, he could not but know, that which is assumed as being so strangely hidden. The sun shining is its own announcement that light is abroad. Honey is its own intimation that there is sweetness in the cup. And repentance—if it were at all the thing which it is so loudly proclaimed to be—would announce itself by the unmistakable experience—‘Bless God, I am reconciled; I was a stranger, now I am a domestic; I was an enemy, now I am a friend; I was a slave, now I am a son; I was at war, now I am at peace; yes, I was already being punished, and, as a rebellious creature, was to have been punished more; but now my rebellion is ended, and I am pardoned.—

Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases !' Would not this, of necessity, I ask, on the ground that we are controverting, be the feeling of a repenting man ? Is it not the feeling which the prodigal actually had—and had it, as is freely assumed—on that ground alone ? And if it was the object of Christ's Incarnation and Atonement simply to bring about this—on however grand a scale, and with whatever glorious results—is it easy, is it possible, soberly, and apart from the exigencies of system, to satisfy oneself that there was any apparent necessity, or even decent propriety, in that most stupendous of all arrangements ? Now that it is there, it has to be explained. But how it ever came to be there is a question which an awakened mind will not easily let sleep ; and it is a question which such a mind will find it hard to answer, if repentance, even in the fullest and deepest sense, does in reality occupy that place against which we are contending.

CHAPTER VI.

ATONEMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LET it be clearly understood that here is the key of our entire position in regard to the sacrifice of Christ. If the *Old Testament* does not embody a divine revelation equally with the New—if the great Sacrifice of the New be not just the substantiating of the shadows of the Old—yea, more, if the language of the later revelation is not to be explained by the usage of the earlier—then we may at once give up the defence of the Christian atonement. I do not mean to say that the New Testament language, tried by any right standard, is not in itself conclusive. What I mean is that, if the groundwork of the Christian atonement is not to be found in the Old Testament, then the whole New Testament doctrine of Christ's death is broken up, and turned into a hopeless puzzle. With the Old Testament against us the battle is lost.

What, then, is the Old Testament doctrine of sacrifice?—I mean, of course, blood-sacrifice, or the offering to God of life by means of death. Does it express in any form the idea of a real *substitution*? Or does it merely represent an act of personal devotion on the part of the worshippers? The question may seem nice rather than practical. But it involves the whole of that Old Testament arrangement which, as will be granted on both sides of the question, is really the groundwork of

the New Testament doctrine. The view, then, which has for long obtained among Christians is, I need hardly say, that of *substitution*. That view is now with great earnestness impugned; and we are asked to believe that the blood-sacrifice was nothing more than a symbolical presentation to God by the worshipper of the most precious gift he could bestow, that is to say, his own life. Such sacrifice, in short, is presented to us, not in the familiar garb of a symbolical *gospel*, but in the extraordinary dress of a symbolical *law*. Now to maintain this, in the face of all that the Scripture presents to us on the subject, is, as may well be supposed, no easy matter. Explanations must be given of the connection between blood-shedding and sin hard to reconcile with the general position assumed. But there is always—and *with* honesty as well as *without* it—a plausible way of defending what is pleasant. There is a way of putting aside a thing, without positively denying it; a way of giving the disputed place to another thing, while dealing tenderly, for the time, with something like its rival. By such, or by other means, you may often envelope your subject and your reader in a cloud of words—till something is made out which is not the real issue—but you declare, perhaps think, that it is—and your reader, if he will and can, accepts of your declaration. Instances of such a style of exposition may perhaps appear in subsequent extracts. Meanwhile, I ask attention to a few quotations expressive of the view that we object to.

Writing upon Heb. ix. 19 ("Moses took the blood of calves and goats," &c.) Mr. Maurice says—"Here, the death of certain victims, the blood which is shed when they are slain, is made the pledge and assurance that

God has taken them (the offerers) to be His servants. This is their consecration; by this they are sealed, redeemed, devoted to Him. . . . I have showed you before that the Passover service implied the sacrifice and dedication of the whole people to God. He took them by that act to be His. He acknowledged that He had redeemed them for His service. They were as much given up to Him as the animal was given up to Him. They were not slain as that was slain; but the sprinkling of the blood, which was at once the sign of the death of the creature, and in which was its life, was the witness that they were offered up as sacrifices to God; that they had no life but what He gave them; that that life was to be used for Him, restored to Him." [Such is a modern account of the Passover Sacrifice. And the Scripture account agrees with it, no doubt, in so far as it represents Israel as *redeemed for God*. But there still remains the double question—redeemed *from what*, and *by what*? The Scripture answer is *from death*, and *by blood*; and here the two accounts part company, and move on in contrary directions. The one account says that the redemption is by *the blood or death of the sacrifice*; the other says it is by *the blood or life of the offerer*. The one, in short, presents an actual redemption *from* and *by* an actual *death*;—the other only professes to give a figurative exhibition of how an Israelite should *live*.]

Again, says the same writer in regard to the Levitical offerings: "He was taught to pour out his own life-blood, and not only the blood of the beasts, before the altar. He was taught that there must be higher and nobler blood poured out for the whole congregation, and for the human race, to purify it of its selfish corruptions, and

to unite it to God.”* [But *why* a ‘higher blood,’ if the ordinary sacrifice so distinctly taught the great moral lesson which really involved all that man needed to learn? And, again, if the natural blood served, in itself, so great a purpose—the whole purpose in fact, of the arrangement—*how* could it ‘teach’ anything ‘higher’ than a truth so satisfactory?]

Mr. Davies thus expresses what he regards as the feelings of the offerer—“Considering that the power to whom the sacrifice was offered was an invisible Power, living and ruling in that unseen world which surrounds the visible life of man, the death of the sacrifice would naturally express—(1) An act of intercourse with the unseen Being—it was a knocking at the door of the unseen world. (2) By laying his hand on it, he identified himself with the offering—this is *my* offering; I, my feelings, my conscience, go with it into the presence of the Unseen; I lay myself at the feet of the God whom I worship.” “Other thoughts would go with these, *e.g.*, the obligation to devote the whole life to God. Thus, when an Israelite sinned, he was to offer an appropriate sacrifice and then, ‘it shall be accepted to make an atonement for him.’ The feeling was this, ‘I have sinned against God—I wish to present an offering to Him—to be accepted by Him, and to return to His favour.’ God pardons the repentant, confessing, obedient sinner. And, in appointing the exact kind of sacrifice, He showed that their repentance was of His own seeking.” So upon the Passover, he says—“The sacrifice of the Passover, and this giving up of the first-born through sacrifice, were a confession on the part of the whole people that they held their natural life as a

* “The Doctrine of Sacrifice,” pp. 168, 82.

gift from God which He might claim, and that they must render it up to Him in service, and trust, and obedience.”*

The following is characteristic, and worthy of attention:—“When we look at the whole genus of which burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, thank-offerings, are the several species, we are forced to regard the generic idea as that of offering and making over a gift to the unseen object of prayer and worship.” [This is quite possible—but then ‘the generic idea’ may (to speak technically), with all its ‘extension,’ want the ‘comprehension’ that we are in search of. Besides which it is also possible that the quality here named may be nothing more than *one* generic idea of the species in question. After all, what we want is the *specific* idea—say of sin-offering—of which the writer goes on to say,] “The details of transaction in a *sin-offering* would naturally bear a reference to *sin* [!]*—its shame, its woe, its death. The idea of the transfer of the sin of the offerer from himself to the victim might occur [!] naturally enough . . . Still, the general idea of sacrifice is that of a gift, of surrendering up to another’s possession that which was outwardly, at least, in our own power.”†*

There is, it will be observed, a strange reluctance here to deal with the *specific*. * What would be thought of such a style in the describing of some natural object, vegetable or animal, noted for its useful or hurtful properties?—as if one should say—‘True, it belongs to such and such a species, and, *naturally* it will have certain specific properties; *still, the general idea* of it is that it possesses that sort of vitality, and is nourished

* “Work of Christ,” pp. 59, 93.

† Rev. F. Garden, “Tracts for Priests and People,” iii. p. 14.

in that sort of way, which is common to all plants or animals !’

Such, then, are the views of sacrifice which are brought forward to supplant our old belief in *substitution*. With these views before us, let us now consider what the Old Testament really teaches in regard to the sacrifice of living creatures.

Now, it would be unwise to make too much of the first probable reference to this, but we are not therefore called upon to overlook it. That reference occurs immediately after the Fall, and consists in the mention of the divinely provided garment for the unhappy pair—“Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” This, then, takes place in direct connection with human sin ; and in the case of those to whom death had been threatened, but to whom victory and deliverance are now announced. It is plain too, that the provision displays more of a moral than of a physical aspect. It was certainly with a moral view, however unworthy the expedient, not for mere physical convenience, that the fig-leaf aprons had been devised. Surely, then, it was with a similar view that they were set aside, and the skin coats provided in their stead. Once more, this is the only arrangement for man’s benefit, that can be called artificial, with which the divine hand has hitherto been associated. And yet, in such a matter, it would seem far more appropriate to have required man to make for himself what he needed, than it was for an All-creating hand to occupy itself with a thing so small. Besides which, the flesh of beasts had not yet been given to man for food ; while sacrifices, as we know, were offered from the very

earliest days, and are so hard to account for, except as a divine provision in connection with human guilt. All which considerations may satisfy us that the making of the skin coats is a matter of extreme importance, as apparently the first visible link of a chain which ends with the manifested Lamb of God.

And if this be the first link, the next is not far off. Remarkable enough that the very first fact in the history of Adam's family should present to us his two sons as bringing to God that offering which naturally seems the most appropriate for each—while yet the one was graciously accepted, and the other miserably rejected. If the preface to a book, or the preamble to a deed, be significant, it would seem that such a fact is not without its importance—"It came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord; and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect." But why such a difference? Viewed according to all natural ideas of right worship and homage, Cain's offering was in every respect as good as his brother's. It was as suitable for a husbandman as was the lamb for a shepherd; not to say that it seemed to have the advantage over its rival, in the sparing of a life of which the sacrifice could profit no one.

Regarding the matter, indeed, from a merely natural point of view, one might almost ask what room there was, at that time, for a keeper of sheep at all. And still more, what could be the meaning of the divine address to the incensed Cain—"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin

lieth at the door.” Cain, it seems, has not done well in any respect. Granting, as we may safely do, that his firstfruits would have been well offered in their own place, it is plain that, brought as they are, they meet with nothing but reprobation. While, on the other hand, the well-doing, like the acceptance, is all on the side of Abel. Nor can the elder brother hope for the blessing which the younger has obtained, except by adopting the same means of securing it. Strange, indeed, that Cain, after such an offering—instead of simply getting the second measure of regard, because his brother had done better than himself—should get no regard at all because he has done nothing right whatever! And not only has there been no well-doing on the part of Cain, and no accepting of him on the part of God; but what means the ominous sentence, “If thou doest not well” (that is, as now done by the accepted offerer), “sin lieth at the door”? It is no explanation of this to make it mean—‘A sin-offering is at hand.’ For what has Cain done, even on that supposition, but refuse the sin-offering? What congruity, then, would there be in the ideas thus supposed to be combined? * Nor will it do to take the *well-doing* as an absolute and impossible legal perfection, which, surely, was not in question, and which would entirely have taken off the mind from the actual well-doing of Abel. Nothing, in short, can suit either the occasion or the language, but to take *sin* as meaning *sin*, and *lieth*, or *croucheth*, as an expression borrowed from the posture of a wild beast ready to spring upon its victim. Thus, with hardly a word of

* Namely these—If thou doest well in bringing the offering, shalt thou not be accepted? But if thou doest not well, in thus bringing the offering, the offering is at hand!

comment, the sense will be—"If thou doest well [as thy accepted brother has just done], shalt not thou [also] be accepted? But if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" [ready to burst in upon thee, and carry thee off as its prey]. And now, in what respect can sin, in such a connection, be thus spoken of, but just as not pardoned? and why not pardoned, but as not having been truly atoned for? The more precise relation of this sentiment to the great truth of atonement must not be anticipated now. Enough, if we can perceive and appreciate the important link in the chain of grace thus presented to us. And if any one has accepted the new idea which would place the value of sacrifice, not in its showing how the offerer's guilt is to be put away, but how his own life is to be consecrated, I will just ask him to explain how, on that supposition, Cain, instead of doing the second best thing, has done nothing good at all—although he has presented, and in all sincerity as far as appears, that which at once supplied the offerer with his very life-blood, and signified, in regard to the great Object of his worship, that "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things."*

* Here is one account of Abel's sacrifice. "Must not all its worth have arisen from this, that he was weak, and that he cast himself upon One whom he knew to be strong; that he was ignorant, and that he trusted in One who he was sure must be wise; that he had the sense of death, and that he turned to One whence life must have come; that he had the sense of wrong, and that he fled to One who must be right? Was not his sacrifice the mute expression of this helplessness, dependence, confidence? If this be the case, we have had a glimpse into the nature of sacrifice, and into its connection with the nature of every human creature, which we may hope will expand into clearer and brighter vision." (Maurice, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," p. 15.) [But then, on the other hand, if all this be only the reflection of the amiable writer's own thoughts, and not the interpretation of Abel's, where are we?]

We glance, in passing, at the sacrifice of Noah, when he offered upon the altar the creatures that had been preserved from the general wreck. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour," or, in the expressive language of the Bible, a *savour of rest*, or *acquiescence*. (Gen. viii. 21.) And then, in connection with this, and the grant of animal food now made (or perhaps renewed), let us mark the significant prohibition, "But flesh *with the life thereof*, which is the *blood thereof*, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 4.) And why? No reason is given. And yet the reason, doubtless, was the same as afterwards, when in the great law of sacrifice it was said, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to atone for your souls." (Lev. xvii. 11.)

Coming from Noah to Abraham, we shall find a very impressive illustration of sacrifice. It is the view of Isaac bound to the altar—the fire below, and the knife above—his doom pronounced, and his end at hand—when just in time the voice exclaims, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything to him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." (Gen. xxii.) And now the doomed one lives—but lives at the expense of the ram caught in the thicket, which the glad father "took and offered up for a burnt-offering *in the stead of his son*." How, then, shall we under-

Another view of the same circumstance is this—"To Abel, the keeper of sheep, who killed one of his flock, as a gift to his father or brother, it was not so unnatural to kill a sheep as an offering to God." (J. Ll. Davies, "Work of Christ," p. 57.) [This is, certainly, an easy way of disposing of the first recorded sacrifice. Does it seem as if an apostle took the same view, when he wrote—"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain"? (Heb. xi. 4.)

stand this? It was plainly not the divine purpose that Isaac should die. It was enough that Abraham should go through the furnace of trial, and come out of it with a brighter devotion to his God than ever. Yes, but God would not, even for an end so holy, bid His servant do a thing that was evil. The thing does, indeed, come as near to being wrong as is conceivable; and in that lies much of the dreadfulfulness of the trial; but wrong it is not. He who says, 'Offer up thy son,' is the absolute arbiter of life and death; Isaac, as a sinner, has forfeited the one, and must, some day, pay the forfeit with the other. If the Sovereign, therefore, shall fix the present moment, and the prescribed mode, for the payment, it will be nothing more than the exercise of His undoubted prerogative. All this is simple fact; and it will be hard to show that it is not *the fact* which underlies and justifies the extraordinary proceeding. But, be this as it may, it is only by sacrifice—and sacrifice in this case, at least, is but another name for substitution—that the sentenced Isaac lives. Here was indeed a life-lesson for a nation—their progenitor on the altar, adjudged to death, and that death transferred to the head of an innocent ram! Here, at least, was the genuine meaning and value of a burnt-offering. Except for that burnt-offering, where had Isaac—where had the seed of Abraham been?

On the other hand, put aside substitution, and how shall we explain the transaction? Can we suppose Isaac as standing beside the slaughtered and smoking victim, with the thought—Thus God demands of me my heart, my service, my life—and I thank Him for the lesson—thus let my love flow forth, and my praises mount up—thus let me yield to Him my all, myself?

Would this be the sense in which *he* would understand Abraham as taking and offering the ram *in the stead of* his son? Whether, in short, would he understand by the expression ‘instead of’—that, as the ram’s life was taken, so his own *was to be given* in a manner analogous? or, that the one life was taken in order that the other *might not be taken*—the ram being slain that Isaac might be spared?

But after all, was not the Most High encouraging the revolting practice of human sacrifice, if ever He meant to signify that such a command should be obeyed? *No*, because *human sacrifice was never practised upon such principles*. Human sacrifice was always designed for averting evil from others by appeasing some deity on their behalf. In the offering of Isaac there was no room for such an idea. There was nothing in it at all but a repetition of the thought—death by sin, and life by substitution. So little occasion did any modern expositor ever have for the dark fancy (that is the revolting thing) that the command never came from God at all; being simply the joint product of Satanic suggestion, and the gloomy, half-heathen mind of the benighted Abraham!—the only real action of God in the matter being to interfere in time, and save mankind from the influence of that accursed deed which was on the point of being perpetrated!*

* See note at the end of this chapter.—There is still one thing worthy of notice, and that is what has been commonly called ‘Abraham’s Sacrifice.’ Now, it is significant that the Scripture does not so name it. (See Gen. xv.) And the reason is obvious—There is no shedding of blood, no presenting upon an altar. The whole consists of an extraordinary view of God as doing that (for the Furnace and the Lamp are *His* acts in providence) which when done by man constitutes an oath, with its well understood symbol in the ancient

Leaving Abraham, we meet with one incident well worthy of note. It is the case of Job in his solicitude for his sons, on the occasion of those periodical feasts, which, as it seems, each on his birthday made for his brothers and sisters. The account is simple, but instructive. "It was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings, according to the number of them all; for Job said, It may be that my sons *have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts*. Thus did Job continually." (Job i. 5.) Here we can see how a patriarch regarded sacrifice as connected with sin and the danger directly attaching to it. This is not the spirit, at least, of those who see in sacrifice nothing but the symbol of a loving self-surrender. It would require a skilful paraphrasing to set up, with any tolerable plausibility, such a view as the real interpretation of Job's feelings. Job had enough to bless God for, and we know how he did bless Him. He did desire, if ever a man did, that he and his might be the Lord's. And yet it was not as a thank-offering under any form, but as a sacrifice for *sin*—or even sin only possibly committed as he feared—that he now presented these burnt-offerings. Thus it was that he aimed at the sanctifying, or cleansing, of his sons from evil. And let us not overlook the significant circumstance, that the record of Job concludes, as it com-

world—namely, the passing of the engager between the parts of the divided victim—thus imprecating upon himself the judgment of being cut through, in case of failure in his engagement. Between these cut parts the blessed God, in condescension to His servant's anxiety, now consents to go, so as to put beyond all question the reality of His OATH. (Gen. xxii. 16; Heb. vi. 13, 16–18.) The explanation of the whole appears clearly in Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19.

mences, with sacrifice—sacrifice for sin—that is, as expressly stated, for the averting of its penal consequences;—"My wrath is kindled against thee and thy two friends," says the divine voice to Eliphaz; "Therefore take with you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept, lest I deal with you after your folly." (xlii. 7, 8.)

Coming back to Abraham's family, now grown into a nation, we find an act of redemption of the whole in the person of the representative firstborn, strongly reminding us of what had taken place in regard to Isaac. We certainly should never have thought of any such redemption; although now in the requirement itself we can read the necessity for it. For, if Egypt alone had deserved the passover judgment, then surely the first-born Israelites had no need of the blood for their deliverance. But alas! Israel could claim no superiority in this respect over their heathen neighbours;—"They rebelled against Me, and would not hearken unto Me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, and accomplish mine anger against them in the land of Egypt." (Ezek. xx. 8, *cf.* Deut. ix.) Hence the provision, Take every man a lamb, and kill it—sprinkle the blood on the doorpost; "and when I see the blood, I will pass over you." Hence was this great transaction, not by figure of speech, but in the fullest sense of the word, a sacrifice—"the sacrifice of the Lord's passover." For thus was the virtue which pertained to

the innocent blood transferred, for the occasion, to the house of the guilty. And thus did this most significant fact become the figure of another immeasurably transcending it in every way—"Christ our PASSOVER is sacrificed for us." At present, however, we are concerned simply with the circumstance that the blood of the lamb was shed *instead of the blood*, or for the redeeming of the life, of the firstborn. Extraordinary, indeed, if, with such a specification of the bad moral condition of the Hebrews—and such a view of death impending, in default of the sprinkled blood—the meaning, after all, should be that the blood was only a symbol of obedience, a token of loyalty—in the absence of which man is always displeasing to his Maker, and in consequence of which God was pleased, on this occasion, to spare His people !

There is a circumstance closely connected with the Passover, of too much importance to be overlooked here—and that is the redemption of the firstborn. Thus, in regard to animals, while the firstling of clean beasts was simply to be sacrificed, that of an ass had to be "redeemed with a lamb"—failing which, it must have its neck broken ;—presenting in this a clear instance of the important alternative of destruction or substitution. And then, beside all that had taken place at the original passover, there is a fresh redemption virtually gone through at each returning one in the land of promise. For, when the son, in time to come, shall say to his father—"What is this?" the answer is to be, "It came to pass that, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, the Lord slew all the firstborn in Egypt, both of man and beast, therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all the firstborn of beasts, being males ; but

all the firstborn of my children I redeem." (Exod. xiii. 8-15.) And redeem them how, except by the life-blood of the paschal lamb?

Mark here the vitally important distinction between *sacrificing* and *redeeming*. The firstborn of beasts (*i.e.* clean beasts) are *sacrificed*. It is in commemoration of the great event when Israel's best life, whether of man or beast, was in danger—deserved danger, we are sure, of being cut off. The human firstborn, on the other hand, are *not sacrificed*, but *redeemed*—"All the firstborn of my children I redeem." They are *redeemed*, in fact, *by sacrifice*. Add to this the distinct *redemption* of the *unclean* firstborn by the special *sacrifice* prescribed for them. And, say after this, whether it is fair to speak of "the firstborn of men as living sacrifices;" and of the passover arrangement generally as being simply "the dedication and consecration of the whole Jewish nation."* What, in short, is all the eloquence expended upon the alleged self-sacrifice of Israel, but just a splendid mist called up betwixt our eye, and the sublime truth of *redemption by sacrifice*?

Once more, in the case of the firstborn, there took place still another national redemption at the numbering of the people in the wilderness—the Levites being "taken for the Lord, *instead of the firstborn* among the children of Israel." And when, after this, there still remained nearly three hundred firstborn, these were redeemed for five shekels each;—the "redemption money" going toward the support of God's ministers the priests. (See Num. iii. 40-51.)

Thus we have redemption in Egypt; redemption in the wilderness; redemption in Canaan;—in various

* Maurice, "Doctrine of Scripture," p. 55.

respects greatly differing, yet all agreeing in this, that they are clearly through substitution.

NOTE ON DEAN STANLEY'S VIEW OF THE OFFERING
OF ISAAC.

The command given to Abraham must not be assumed as actually from God, he urges, because "the same temptation, which in one book is ascribed to God, is in another ascribed to Satan (*cf.* 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 with 1 Chron. xxi. 1)." "The form taken by this divine trial or temptation was that which a stern logical consequence of the ancient view of sacrifice did actually assume . . . among the surrounding tribes. Deep in the heart of the Canaanitish nation was laid the practice of human sacrifice. On the altars of Moab, Phœnicia, &c., this almost irrepressible tendency of the burning zeal of a primitive race found its terrible expression. Such was the trial which presented itself to Abraham. . . . The sacrifice, the resignation of the will in the father and the son, was accepted; the literal sacrifice of the act was repelled. On the one hand, the great principle was proclaimed that mercy is better than sacrifice, and that the sacrifice of self is the highest and holiest offering that God can receive. On the other hand, the inhuman superstitions, towards which the ancient ceremonial of sacrifice was perpetually tending, were condemned and cast out of the true worship of God for ever." . . . "There are difficulties," he allows, in the case, "but they vanish before the simple pathos and lofty spirit of the narrative, provided we take it as a whole." "Nothing is so remarkable a proof of a divine and watchful interposition as the deliverance from the infirmity, the exaggeration, the excess—or whatever it is to which the noblest minds and forms of religion are subject. Abraham reached the very verge of an act, which even if prompted by noble motives [?], and a divine call [?], has been, by all subsequent revelation and experience, pronounced accursed. At that moment his

hand is stayed, and the patriarchal religion is rescued from this conflict with the justice of the law and the mercy of the gospel. . . . Thus sacrifice is rejected, but 'To do Thy will, O God,' is accepted—the will of God being the union of parental love, with the total denial of self."

To characterize such a treatment of divine truth, as I think it deserves, is not my province. But I will suggest that any one wishing to understand the mind and system of the writer may see something of both in the present passage. Meanwhile, we cannot help asking—If the command was not of God, then where appeared the resignation to His will? If it was the most hateful thing possible to Him, in what sense could He accept it in either its form or spirit? "It was thus proclaimed," we are told, "that the sacrifice of self is the highest and holiest offering that God can receive;" and yet this is displayed in a deed among the lowest and foulest that Satan could suggest! And thus a mistake which cannot be overrated—an offering as monstrous as Moloch could desire—proclaims the true principle of acceptable sacrifice! Now to plain minds such explanations of things must seem strange. The sacrifice to God—the resignation to His will—had nothing to do, it seems, with that will? How could it, when it was all in contradiction to it? But it comes to the same in the end! Abraham naturally loved his son, and yet was willing to sacrifice him, when Satan bade him, and Moloch wanted him; and thus the perfect denial of self, with such a parental love as Abraham's, was *the doing of the will of God!* And such is the teaching—would that England would mark it!—such is the teaching of one of her favourite masters.*

* See Stanley, "Lectures on the Jewish Church," Lecture ii.

CHAPTER VII.

MOSAIC SACRIFICES.

WE come now to the blood-sacrifices, as prescribed to Israel through Moses. Nor can anything be more important in this inquiry than to know what these really meant, as offered up within that favoured spot of Canaan—surrounded as it was by a world whose groaning heart seemed unable to rest, without an incessant effort to appease the angry gods by the blood of its own sons and daughters. What, then, did those sacrifices mean? They meant this first of all, whatever besides, that thus the sins of the people were to be *atoned for* and pardoned. I say this, because such is the light in which the Scripture distinctly presents them.

To *atone*—precisely so (I hear it said), and what does ‘atone’ mean, but to reconcile? For what was the idea of an Israelite in making atonement, but just that he was confessing his faults—expressing his allegiance to his God—thinking how his own life-blood should be poured out in love and obedience—in a word, leaving sin, and returning to duty—thus *atoning for* his sin, or declaring that he was now *at-one with* his God?

That this theory has something which is fitted strongly to commend it to a large class of minds is sufficiently plain. But that it may fairly be regarded as even specious is not so easy to allow. The word ‘at-one’

points, of course, to something in the way of *reconciling*; but then it is only an English word, after all—and certainly not the one which really corresponds to the Hebrew expression for which it is so frequently put. The proper word with us would not be ‘atone,’ but ‘cover.’ It so happens, in fact, that the word ‘atone-ment’ is used only once in the English version for a word which, in the original, expresses the idea of ‘reconciliation.’ (Rom. v. 11.) Nor do we find that, in any of the other cases, the word means what we understand by ‘reconcile.’ Were it so, then we should surely meet with such expressions as these—to ‘atone persons,’ to ‘atone one to another;’ instead of which it is always to ‘atone for sins,’ or ‘persons;’ or to ‘atone by means of.’ And why such a usage, but just because ‘atone’ and ‘reconcile,’ however related, are not equivalent? Does it not seem, in short, that the one is a means, the other an end? I *atone for* my offence, with the view of *being reconciled to* the offended party;—is not that the right use of both expressions? If so, then we may see what each of them means; we may see that *atone for* always expresses the idea of compensation of some sort; while my being ‘reconciled’ to another may certainly point not only to a change of mind in me, but to the removal of something in him which equally stood in the way of my enjoying his favour. Thus it was that David was suspected of a plot to “reconcile himself to his master,”—that is to say, to remove the displeasure, and recover the favour of Saul. (1 Sam. xxix. 4.) Thus, if any one, on his way to the altar, “remembers that his brother has *ought against him*,” he is “first to go, and *be reconciled* to his brother.” (Matt. v. 24.) And what if, according to both ordinary and Scriptural

usage, the call—"Be ye reconciled to God," has just this meaning—the reason subjoined being nothing less than a statement of that very *atonement* which provides for the *reconciliation*: "For He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin" ? (2 Cor. v. 20, 21.)

But now to come to the offerings. First, and chief of all, we have the burnt-offering—the simplest and fullest representation of the great idea of sacrifice. Such was Abel's lamb, and Noah's offering, and Elijah's sacrifice; such was the character, first, of the offering of Isaac in person, then of his redemption by the ram offered instead; and such was the morning and evening sacrifice, each day of the year, for Israel. Now certainly this, if anything, was a gift presented, at God's own command, by man to his Maker. It was the very *bread* of God, spread upon His *table*. (Lev. xxi. 6, 8; Mal. i. 7.) Nothing of this went either to the human owner, or to the priest; but all of it to the divine owner—God who is a Spirit. And, as an offering to Him, it must be pure and perfect; and then, when well washed, must be "all burnt on the altar, a burnt-sacrifice (a going up), an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour to the Lord." (Lev. i. 9.) Thus the whole *goes up* to Him who graciously stoops down to regard and accept it. And, besides all this, to make it a fitter present for the King who has come to dwell among His subjects, there is the regular *drink-offering* accompanying it. (Exodus xxix. 40, 41; Lev. xxiii. 13; Num. xv. 5.)

Now, all this may plausibly be represented as merely a gift of devotion, acceptable as such, and nothing more.*

* It is much to be regretted that this is the view given in the new work, known as "The Speaker's Commentary." In the Introduction to Leviticus the subject of sacrifice is treated with great minuteness

But what of that which lies at the foundation of the whole—"He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering; and it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement [to cover over] for him"? (Lev. i. 4.) What, if all the sweet savour—savour of rest or acquiescence—which accompanies the gift, be just an expression of the satisfaction which the Sovereign has in the atonement made, and of the pleasure with which He regards His accepted worshipper, inviting him to a similar going up of *his* heart and service! Would not this be a reasonable way of viewing each part of the

of detail, and profusion of learning; but in vain the reader looks for information upon the radical idea of 'atoning for.' Coming to Lev. i. 4, where Moses speaks of this as the very first thing in the burnt-offering, we are told that "this phrase is used rarely of burnt-offering"—no remark being made upon it! "It belongs more especially to the sin and trespass-offering"—all the cases of this in the following chapters being referred to; but not a word on the subject as these chapters are commented on! Then upon Lev. xvii. 11, the charter of sacrifice—where the correct translation is adopted—not a word as to the great lesson—nothing but criticism upon *nephesh*, with the physiology of blood! There is nothing, in short, but the assumption that the sacrifice denotes personal dedication. "The believer confessed the obligation of surrendering himself, body, soul, and spirit, to the Lord of heaven and earth who had been revealed to him. The truth expressed in the whole burnt-offering is the unqualified self-sacrifice of the person." In the treatment of chapter xvi. there is, of necessity, more in reference to the atoning for and putting away of sin. But after what has been said, and not said, on the other chapters, it is not easy to see how the writer can mean, by atonement, more than just that 'spiritual restoration' of which he speaks. As for any argument or evidence in favour of this view, I can find nothing beyond a reference to the meaning of the Mosaic term for burnt-offering (namely, *olâh*, a *going up*)—as if there were any incongruity between 'going up' and 'atoning for'—as if, indeed, the very fact of 'having atoned' might not be an essential element in the virtue of the 'ascending.' It is no strange thing, surely, if the *blood*, in which is the life, should first be shed for 'atoning;' and then the *body* be burnt, and 'go up,' to tell how acceptable the whole had proved.

ceremony, and of combining the whole—instead of that poor practice, in deference to some fond theory, of entirely ignoring some particular part of an appointment, however vital it may be? Anyhow, is it not plain—and this is enough—that there is no acceptance of either the offering or the offerer, except as the victim is employed in ‘atoning for’ the man? And, thus viewing the entire service, we can see that—while, in its first act, there is no room for the worshipper, except as a sinner to be ‘atoned for’ by the blood of another—there is ample room in the subsequent stage for the spectacle of the worshipper also “presenting himself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God as his reasonable service.” And what more fit, whether under the law or the gospel, that he should be entreated “by the mercies of God” to do so? (Rom. xii. 1.) The mercy which has provided the great dying sacrifice for man may well engage him to present himself a living sacrifice to the God of his mercy.

Next comes the sin-offering, in its fourfold application to the anointed priest, the congregation, the ruler, and the private person.

Take the first of these. After transgressing through ignorance some divine command, he has to bring for his sin a young bullock for a sin-offering—which being slain, he takes the blood into the sanctuary, sprinkling some of it seven times before the vail, putting some of it on the horns of the golden altar, and then pouring out the rest at the other altar. The fat being now burnt at the same altar, the beast itself is carried to a clean place without the camp, and entirely burnt. The same ceremony is gone through for the whole congregation, when needful, with the single difference that

the elders have to lay their hands on the victim's head. And then, after the sprinkling, and pouring out of the blood, "the priest shall make atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them." So in the other two cases—although wanting the peculiar solemnity of sprinkling the blood before the vail, and burning the beast outside the camp—there is no difference in the one essential object, "The priest shall make atonement," &c.

Here, then, everything speaks of sin—first as committed, then as 'covered over;' and of death, as the means of the covering—the death of the victim, whether as giving out its blood to atone upon the altar, or as being carried without the camp, and reduced to ashes there. All this seems wonderfully like to substitution; and wonderfully unlike the personal consecration, in any form, of the offerer himself. There is just one scanty allusion to the fat giving out "a sweet savour;" and the burning to ashes outside the camp seems not a resemblance, but a contrast, to the approach, under whatever attitude, of a living worshipper to the living God. It does not seem to represent penitence or self-mortification—or anything at all, in fact, on the part of the Israelite; but rather a conspicuous act, on the part of his Sovereign, for the complete putting away of His people's sin from their sight, and from His sight, by atoning blood and absolute forgiveness. These, at least, are the *only matters* that are spoken of in the full, and repeated account of the ceremony. And it is a hard thing to ask us to add, to a description so detailed, elements of which there is no germ in the account itself.

Just one thing more—whatever analogy there may be between the *burnt-offering*, in one of its stages, and the offerer himself—no one will profess to find in Scrip-

ture any hint of such analogy between the *sin-offering* and the worshipper—any exhortation to man to be, or to act in the character of, such a sacrifice! Of animals the sin-offerings have been numberless. Of *persons* there is only one—spoken of in the Bible, or known in the world—as ever having filled so extraordinary a place.

Next, there is the *trespass-offering*, so closely allied to the sin-offering that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between them, except for the material compensation always attached to the former. It is enough for our present purpose to note the arrangement that, for certain specified sins of ignorance, “The priest shall make atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.” (See Lev. v.) Again, for certain moral offences, such as falsehood, perjury, dishonesty—in addition to the fixed compensation—the trespass-offering is ordered, and as before, “The priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord; and it shall be forgiven him, for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.” (vi. 7; xix. 22.) Such was the provision. And there is no trace, it will be observed, in this case more than in the other, of any analogy between the offerer and his offering. And while these offerings, like the preceding, were so many; yet among *men* there is only one who is ever said to have presented Himself as such. And that is He who, in having had “laid upon Him the iniquity of us all,” is represented as “making His soul a trespass-offering.” (*asham*, Isaiah liii. 10.)

There was, it will be remembered, another class of sacrifices—the *peace-offering*. And if anything denoted *reconciliation* to God, or peace with man, assuredly this did. For, of all the offerings, it was peculiarly the one

in which the devout worshipper poured out his heart in full thanksgiving; or sealed, by actual payment, some vow which his lips had uttered; or found the satisfaction of a loving heart in bringing a freewill-offering, as a thing neither promised nor prescribed. (Lev. vii. 12, 16.) Again, this was the only offering of which any share was left for the worshipper himself—he and the altar, that is to say, he and his God, thus enjoying a fellowship which was peculiar to this occasion. And, finally, this was the offering which, above all, constituted the great festival of tithes and firstlings—of which it was said, “Thou shalt eat them in the place that the Lord shall choose—thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates; and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, in all that thou puttest thy hand unto.” (Deut. xii. 18.) Now, surely, if the mere *state* or *experience* of *reconciliation* be the true *atonement*—if the worshipper’s consecration to God be *the thing* really signified by the atoning sacrifice—then this, of all places or occasions, was the one for such an offering; and yet this is just *the one* of all the animal sacrifices which is *never said to atone for sins*. It was *the one*, above all the others, which expressed *reconciliation*, or *peace already made*; and, for that very reason, we may suppose, it is never said to *atone for* the worshipper. There was the usual imposition of hands, indeed, and sprinkling of the blood. As for the actual atonement, it seems to be taken for granted, as having been otherwise effected, in so far as it was really required in the circumstances. But—and this, too, is significant—while the peace-offering is never represented as serving to put away sin, the wrong handling of it by any one will bring sin upon him, so

that "he shall bear his iniquity," and "be cut off from his people." (vii. 18, 20.)

And so with the *meat-offering* (ch. ii.), all is fragrance and pleasantness. The burning oil, and smoking incense, with the "sweet savour to the Lord," speak plainly of reconciliation and communion; but of *atonement* they say nothing. That has been effected already by some of the other sacrifices to which this only constitutes a pleasant and significant addition. Nor does the offering of the precious Passover firstfruits, with its grateful memories and cheering prospects—all so sweetly calling for self-sacrifice—teach any other lesson. It is spoken of as *accepted for*, but never as *atoning for*, the offerer. Nor is it otherwise with the Pentecost bread, the firstfruits of the full harvest. With its pleasant accompaniments this, like the other, does give out a "sweet savour;" but all that can atone depends entirely upon the accompanying sin and burnt-offerings.* (See Lev. xxiii.)

It is interesting to note, with a view to a fuller appreciation of its real object, various other cases in which atonement is made, or not made; or made at one stage, and not at another. Thus we have the consecration of the Nazarite. (Num. vi.) Now, if bloodshedding be properly and principally a token of self-sacrifice, how peculiarly we should expect it at the time of this act of separation. And yet, strange as it may seem, there is nothing of it here. On the other hand, if the Nazarite has become defiled through a sudden death, then, besides

* There is just one case in which *atonement* is supposed to be made by a *meat-offering*; and that is where, for one of the lightest offences, the offerer was too poor to bring his turtle doves, and the other was permitted by way of a substitute.

the shaving of his head, he has to bring two birds, of which "the priest shall offer one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, and *make an atonement for him* for that (or, from what) he hath sinned by the dead." The days of his separation are now lost, and, as if to atone for the loss, a trespass-offering is required before a new consecration can take place. Then finally, when his whole time is completed, he has to present, amid a profusion of other things, his sin-offering and burnt-offering—as if to clear away any possible guilt contracted during the period of his separation. Thus the blood, instead of denoting consecration, seems here at least rather to point to something in the way of desecration.

Turn now to the analogous case of the Levites (Num. viii. 1-22), where we find consecration of the most direct and complete kind; and where there would be a perfect opportunity for that use of blood which we are now combating, if, indeed, such had been the designed use of it. See, then, how the matter stands. First, there comes cleansing—and how?—"Sprinkle water of purifying (sin-offering as in Numbers xix. 9, 12, 19) upon them"—then another sin-offering, in the form of a bullock—followed by still another of the same, and, not till then, a burnt-offering;—and even these last two, "to make an *atonement* for the Levites." And all this in the case of those who "have been separated from among the children of Israel," "wholly given unto the Lord from among them"—"taken to Himself instead of all the first born," as "a gift to Aaron and his sons to do the service of the children of Israel, in the tabernacle of the congregation." There could have been no fitter case, surely, for the display of the principle that

the dedication of the soul to God was symbolized by the offering of sacrificial blood. And yet the case is conspicuous simply by the absence of every thing of the kind. See, again, how the people “put their hands upon the heads of the Levites”—and that, so plainly, by way of transferring their burden of service to them. What is it, then, that the Levites mean when “*they lay their hands on the heads of the bullocks,*” which are to “*make atonement for them*”? There is here, surely, something which they, in *their* turn, are transferring. And, as that cannot be *service*, what can it be but *sin*? Once more, it is one of the chief functions of the newly-appointed ministers to “*bear the iniquity of the children of Israel,*” and “*to make atonement for them, that there be no plague among them,*” or, in other words, “*lest they bear sin, and die.*” (Num. xviii. 22, 23.) Could anything make plainer what the Scripture means by ‘bearing sin’—our own or our neighbour’s—as a thing leading to ‘death’—and that death put away by ‘atonement’? Is any one in doubt about the meaning of such terms? Then let me commend to him the study of these two accounts of this matter. And let him remember that, after all, we are only pleading for a very old, and long, long, unquestioned sense of very familiar words. And then let it be asked—if such be the design of atonement when made by the Levites for the people, what else can it be when made by the Levites for themselves? And if, in such cases, it be so, does it not seem both natural and reasonable to infer that it cannot be very different in any other case, where the inference, instead of being guarded against, seems clearly to be assumed? Enough if it appear now that the *blood* of the sin-offering is *no symbol of the service of the Levites.*

It would be a bold thing to assert that it was. And, as for the Nazarites, the assertion, however bold, would be impossible; since there is no blood shed in their case at all, except at the interruption or termination of their service.

There is just one other case which seems to call for special notice here. It is a very peculiar view of atonement, and one which Moses himself seems not to have distinctly apprehended at the first. "Wherefore,"—he asks Aaron, after the death of his two sons—"have ye not eaten the sin-offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to *bear the iniquity* of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord?" (Lev. x. 17.) A strange question, truly, unless we take with us the simple, and yet deep, view here and elsewhere given of sacrifice. For thus we are taught that to "make atonement for" any one pre-supposes the "bearing of his iniquity."* But the real atoning element was, as we know, the blood; while yet the atoning work became more complete, through an actual incorporation of the sacrifice with the party 'bearing the iniquity,' and 'making the atonement.'

* Nothing can be clearer than that in the books of Moses, 'to bear sin,' or 'iniquity,' our own or another's, always means to *become liable for the punishment of it*—being frequently interchanged with, 'His blood shall be upon him,' or 'He shall be cut off from his people.' To be 'forgiven' just as clearly means the contrary of this, or 'not having to bear sin.' To 'atone for it, that it may be forgiven,' means to cover it over, through a sacrificial provision, so as to escape the liability to punishment. The following passages will sufficiently illustrate these expressions in connection with one another:—Lev. iv. 20, 26, 35; v. 16; vii. 18, 20, 21; xvi. 21, 22; xvii. 16; xix. 8, 17; xx. 17, 19; xxiv. 15. Numb. v. 31; ix. 13; xii. 11; xiv. 18, 19, 33, 34; xv. 25, 26, 28, 31; xviii. 1, 22, 23, 32; xxx. 15; cf. Ezek. xviii. 20; Lam. v. 7.

Now all this, while really striking and profound, is at the same time both distinct and practical. But how, with the new idea of atonement, should we ever understand either the language, or the appointment?*

Besides all this, there comes round, year by year, the season so impressively styled 'the day of atonements,'—when Aaron has to "make an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel;" and then "for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, because of their transgressions in all their sins; and for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make atonement for it, and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar, round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." After which, bringing

* The following would be as straightforward an attempt to explain the case on that ground as I can imagine.—'To bear another's sin means to sympathize with him in the feelings that he has, or ought to have, about it—thoroughly identifying myself with him in his situation; and thus I offer the blood of an animal to atone for him—that is to say, I show by this how I pour out my heart to God, and thus keep away sin by obedience, or put it away by repentance—at the same time showing him that he should do so too. And thus his sin is atoned for, that is to say, he thus comes to have, or is shown how he ought to have, right feelings towards his Maker. And then further, to show how I identify myself with the creature which furnishes the means of representing both my own feelings, and my neighbour's duty, I conclude by feeding on its flesh.'—This statement of the theory should be, I think, a sufficient refutation of it. If more is wanted, I refer to the previous note on the 'bearing of sin.'

forth the live goat, for which atonement has been already made (*v.* 10), he “lays both his hands upon its head, confessing over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, putting them upon the head of the goat,” which thus “bears them all upon him unto a land not inhabited.” Thus everything is held as polluted—people, priests, and places, with their furnishings, and even the very goat which is to bear sin away; all has contracted the defilement which attaches to man himself; all needs to be purged from sin. And how simple and direct is the expiation! That wonderful blood supplies the covering, and the sin is blotted out. Thus does the priest “make atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.” (*Lev. xvi.*)

Now all this, solemn and positive as it is, may seem to wear a very secular and superficial aspect; it may be ceremonial, shadowy, and transitory. So the New Testament represents it as being. But it is, at least, very distinct. So far as it goes, it certainly professes to provide for the putting away of sin and its consequences, in the sense that the world has always understood by ‘forgiveness.’ While nothing can be more far-fetched, or foreign, at once to the whole train of ancient thought, Jewish or Gentile, and to the whole Mosaic arrangement, whether as to letter or spirit, than the idea that the blood so profusely shed represented the personal dedication of the offerer to God! Just suppose the overawed multitude on the day of atonement to have had its own acts and feelings thus expounded to it!* But the idea is enough. Let us

* The only feelings that the Jews seem aware of ever having had on the occasion are those described in the Mishna—“O Lord, Thy people, the house of Israel have transgressed, they have rebelled,

allow, then, that the whole was, in one sense, only a shadow. Yet that, like other shadows, had a very substantial thing behind it. And thus, what was only ceremonial in the shadow had a spiritual substance for its counterpart; and what was only for a day, or a year, did yet point the road to everlasting blessing. So does the gospel very plainly teach us. It must be a serious mistake, then, to think that these things do not concern us, if all the while the divine Architect was thus laying the groundwork, and drawing out the plan, of a spiritual and everlasting redemption. And it must be worse than a mistake—from dislike of the plain doctrine of vicarious sacrifice as God's method of forgiveness—to frame to ourselves an Old Testament in which the dying of one creature *for* another does not really mean *instead of*; nor forgiveness mean what the world has always understood it to mean—namely, the direct remitting of a penalty—but only something which, as having the same kind of good result or influence, may properly be called by the same name!

they have sinned before Thee. I beseech Thee now, absolve their transgressions, their rebellion, and their sins, that they have sinned against Thee—as it is written in the law of Moses, Thy servant, that on this day he shall make atonement for you, and cleanse you from all your sins, and ye shall be clean.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DIVINE LAW OF SACRIFICE.

"THE life of the flesh is in the blood ; and I have given it to you upon the altar to *atone* for your lives ; for the blood *atoneth* through the life." (Lev. xvii. 11.)

Such is the divine law of sacrifice ; or, as we may call it, the GRAND CHARTER of the atoning blood—then, for the first time, expressly recorded, and perhaps promulgated ; although clearly implied in the direction given to Noah—"Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 4.) It is in the same connection that the momentous announcement before us is made—"No man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, may eat any manner of blood ; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people." And then the reason why. Not because of any mystical sacredness about the sanctuary of our own life, as represented by the life-blood of the animal ; but simply because the blood, as containing the life, had been set apart by the great Sovereign for the most solemn of all uses at the altar. It may surprise us how any one, after this, should say that the Old Testament contains no explanation of sacrifice,* and therefore leaves us free to determine its

* Thus, "We have no declaration in the books of Moses concerning the intended significance of a blood-sacrifice in general. This is a fact to which I would call your attention." (J. Ll. Davies, "Two Sermons," p. 58.)

meaning as we can. And it may also surprise us to find how the very language of the statute has been ingeniously interpreted so as quite to take away the mind from the view so clearly held forth by it. And yet so it is. What with ignoring on the one hand, and misinterpreting on the other, this very distinct statement, men have indulged in their own speculations about sacrifice, just as if God had given them no information on the subject. And one may perhaps in such circumstances be pardoned for feeling it to be somewhat of a mystery in divine providence that, through the current error in the translation of a Hebrew phrase, a needless obscurity should have been permitted to gather over an enactment so important. For, looking at the last clause of it as given above, it will be seen to stand in a very different form from that to which we are accustomed; and it will be well to linger for a moment, before proceeding to account for the alteration as just given. The matter is an extremely simple one, but unfortunately not so commonly known as it should be; and so I must try to present it in such a light as to satisfy any intelligent reader that he may, and must, accept of the alteration put before him.

Suppose, then, that in a book which you very highly esteemed there were two separate expressions occurring in a single sentence—the sentence being one which expressed a peculiarly important matter in a peculiarly definite way. One of the principal objects of the book, in short, is expressed in that sentence. Besides which, these expressions are found scattered throughout the book, and each always in its own sense—one of them occurring in ten other places, and the other in nearly seven times as many more. The one that occurs so

often means, we shall say, to *cover over*; the other always, as, from the words themselves, it ought to mean, to *cover through*, or *by* (means of); besides which, both expressions occur together in two of the ten cases, and each in its own definite sense.* What would you think, now, if some one, not quite understanding the important declaration in question, should profess to clear up the sense by saying, 'Oh, the two expressions here just mean the same thing; I grant that, in all the other cases, the second of them means to *cover by*; but then it does not seem how that could apply here, and therefore it can only mean, like the other, to *cover over*.' Impossible! (you would answer)—Whether the meaning be plain or not, it is plain that that is not it, so long as the words are worth inquiring into at all. Besides which, it happens that a peculiar awkwardness in the present case would attach to this strange style of interpretation; for it seems that, by the second expression, the writer is giving a reason for what he had said in

* The ten cases in which we find the expression '*atone by*' (not reckoning the instances where the same form denotes *locality*) are Gen. xxxii. 20; Exod. xxix. 33; Lev. v. 16, vii. 7; Num. v. 8, xxxv. 33; 1 Sam. iii. 14; 2 Sam. xxi. 3; Prov. xvi. 6; Isaiah xxvii. 9—the first and third of these containing both the expressions. The following views, in accordance with what is now contended for, are taken from Fairbairn's *Typology*, and Bähr's *Symbolik*. Aben-Ezra says—"Sanguis animâ, quæ sibi inest, expiat." Abarbanel—"Eritque pecudis sanguis, quia anima sentiens in eo est, pro animâ hominis, anima pro animâ." R. Bechai, on Lev. i., "Deus accipit animam pecudis pro animâ hominis, expiatque per eam." Among Christian expositors Theodoret writes on Lev. xvii. 11, "As (says Moses) thou hast an immortal soul, so the brute beast, instead of a soul, has the blood; for which reason He commands the soul of the brute, that is, the blood, to be offered instead of thy immortal soul" (ἀντὶ τῆς σῆς προσενεχθῆναι ψυχῆς τῆς ἀθανάτου). Gousset says, "Per animam, i.e., vi animæ in eo sanguine constantis."

using the first; from which it would follow, if the two expressions are equivalent, that he is committing the foolish mistake of giving a thing as a reason for itself!—as if one, in a matter of extreme moment, should talk thus—‘I have given you this dress to cover over your head, for this dress covers over the head!’ ‘No,’ you say, ‘whatever may be the sense, it is not that, for that is none.’

Let us now try what can be done, by taking each of the expressions at its own understood value. “The life (or soul) of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to atone *for** your lives (souls); for the blood atoneth *by* † the life (soul).”

No one, surely, need stumble at this, for the language is very distinct, and the meaning very simple. And all the more so when we further observe that, instead of two different expressions, there is only one throughout, which may be rendered by the simple word *life* or *soul*, according to choice. Let us say *life*, and the whole will stand thus:—The blood is not to be eaten, “for the *life* of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to atone *for your lives*; for the blood atoneth *through the life*.” That is to say, the life which it contains is the atoning principle or element in the blood. The blood, *by means of the life*, atones *for* the life. Thus it is simply a case of *life for life*—one life offered and accepted for another. If this be not what Moses means, it will be hard indeed to find out his meaning from his words. We may, of course, like and dislike; we may speculate; we may write our own interpretation over the words of Scripture, till we have effaced them altogether; but, plainly enough, this is

* Cover over.

† Covers by, or, through.

what the Scripture says—that the blood atones for the life, and it does that by means of the life which is in it. The result, I need hardly say, will be precisely the same, if, instead of life, we read *soul* throughout—“The soul* of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to atone for your souls; for the blood atoneth by means of the soul” (that is in it).

Such is the Mosaic atonement—blood for blood; that is to say, life for life, or soul for soul. And this is that which God is so often spoken of as accepting. This is that through which was to come the oft-promised blessing of forgiveness. It was this which was to prefigure and prepare for the grandest act that the universe ever witnessed. Can it be a light thing, then, to reject the view that Moses presents of such a transaction? For just ponder, for a moment, this most significant expression, to *cover upon*, or *over*, and see what it teaches—“I have given it to you to cover over your souls.” Is there, then, about their souls, something which needs to be covered over? It seems so. And what can that be but sin, together with the *death* which it brings? For here is a material, chosen simply because animal life is in it, and put as a covering upon a certain spiritual being, whose life, unspeakably more precious, has been forfeited through sin. And now the purpose is accomplished; that which had to die on account of its sin lives on account of the covering blood. Surely, then, it is something better than the empty phraseology of a sect; it is a truth which lies embedded in the very vitals of the Scripture revelation, that the atoning blood is

* It need not be thought that there is any incongruity in this, for we even read of the *spirit* of a beast. (Ecc. iii. 21.)

actually a God-provided covering for putting out of sight the death-entailing guilt of a sinner.

It is easy, of course, to imagine a plausible objection to all this. 'Do you really mean,' it may be said, 'that each Israelite that ever offered a sacrifice must have died but for the death of the victim in his stead?' No, I do not mean that, nor does any such conclusion follow from what has been advanced. At that rate the human family must long ago have perished, or rather could never have had a standing in the world at all. But if God was pleased to reveal to His people Israel, and day by day exhibit to them the death which sin, in every shape, brings on man, and, together with this, that means which alone can procure for him a true remission and redemption—then surely, that was reason enough for the appointment. The principle of God's law is one thing, and His providential administration of the world is another. God, it is allowed, forbids all sin—and yet how much He seems to wink at, or even smile on! But man's wickedness and desert of punishment are not affected by such forbearance. Even so does the grand principle enunciated in every blood-sacrifice stand untouched by the fact of "mercy remembered in the midst of wrath." And that principle, I maintain, was in every case, simply and solely the principle of *life for life*—the victim's life *instead of* the offerer's. I plead for this, as the only view that accords with the various facts and notices of the case, as well as with the ancient understanding on the subject; but, above all, as the view explicitly given in the Mosaic law or charter of sacrifice. It is easy enough now, when the great sacrifice has to be explained away, to argue that the offering of the victim's blood represented simply the self-

devotion incumbent on the worshipper. But who ever dreamt of such a thing till the necessity, as just hinted at, sprung up for the theory? Was this either the general sentiment, or the special meaning of the Character? What propriety was there in preparing a *covering* for the life, if, all the while, the very object was to show how that life was to be, not covered, but on the very contrary, *exercised* and *exhibited*, namely, in entire consecration to God? Was there anything in a beast's blood which would naturally suggest the offering of a human heart and life?—and that too, in the utter silence of Scripture on the subject—yes, and in spite of the positive assertion of a reason that looks so different? True, it was the *life* of the creature that was given away in its blood; but such a giving up of life is only another name for death. *Death*, in short, constituted the whole of the deed, and the whole of the design. Was this, then, God's grand symbol for that human consecration of which the one meaning is simply *life*? Was it thus that the great Teacher was then educating the world? Was it thus that the foundation was laid for that sacrifice by which we are redeemed? It has been commonly believed that a shadow has some conformity to its substance; but here there would be only contrariety.

In saying this, I am quite aware that it can be urged—'Yes, indeed, there *is* conformity; for the consecration of a human being to the true God is a real death to the false god self, and is therefore well symbolized by the altar-blood.' No, I answer—whatever of such death (real or figurative, as you please) may accompany our self-consecration—that consecration is truly and only life. The giving up of our heart's blood to God is the

strongest possible picture of a *soul as living*; whereas the taking away of the blood of the animal is nothing but a view of the creature as *dying*. And thus, disentangling the matter from the play of fancy and the drapery of words, it would appear as if the violent dying of a beast were employed as the truest symbol for the spiritual living of a man! Besides all which, let it be remembered that the real Scripture symbol of direct consecration to God is not the atoning blood, but the anointing oil. And finally, what Israelite, let me ask, in causing, or seeing, a victim's blood to flow, seems to have imagined that he had before his eyes the divine means of educating him to the work of self-surrender? No, it was another view of divine arrangement that presented itself to him, when he heard of various sacrificial provisions as made with the design, "that he die not," or "be cut off from his people"—when he heard of "atonement being made for his sin, that it might be forgiven him."*

* The following is what may be called the *personal-dedication* view of Lev. xvii. 11, as given by Bähr:—"The symbolical character of the offering consists in this, that the presenting of the *nephesh* (soul, or life) in the sacrificial blood on the altar, as the place of the presence and manifestation of God, is a symbol of the presenting of the *nephesh* by the offerer to Jehovah the Holy. As that presenting of the (animal) blood (soul) is a giving up of the (animal) life in death, so must also the *soulish*, i.e. *selfish*, in opposition to the *godly* life of the offerer, be given up and die. But, because this giving up is a giving up to Jehovah the Holy One, so it is no mere *ceasing*, not a simple negative, but a dying which *in itself* becomes a *living*, since the sanctification aimed at by this consecration to Jehovah, and the accompanying fellowship with Him, is, according to the Mosaic principle even, the true life; the *soulish* dying is the condition of the true life. The meaning of the offering is then shortly this—that the *soulish* (sinful) *being* (life) is given up to God in the death—in order to the attaining of the true being (*i.e.* sanctification) through connection

And now, if this be the real idea designed in the Hebrew Scriptures by the expression 'cover over' which we so frequently render 'atone for,' we may see at once the significance of the figure, and—which is no mean test of an interpretation—the suitability of the manner in which the word 'cover' is used in a great variety of connections.

Thus, we have the *two* expressions already considered, namely, to 'atone *for*,' and to 'atone *by*.' Then again, the idea of 'atoning for' is expressed by the various forms 'cover *upon*,' 'cover *for*,' and simply 'cover.' And this 'covering' is applied to *persons*, and *sins*, and *things*, and once at least to an *animal*, the scapegoat—all which cases we can perfectly see to harmonize with one another, so long as we regard both men and things (from their connection with men) as defiled with something needing to be covered. But how shall we recognize any such harmony, if once we consider the sacrificial blood as symbolizing the offering up to God of the offerer's heart? It is bad enough to represent him as bringing any covering with such a view, when all should be openness itself. But what meaning shall we attach to the same language when applied to *things* or *animals*, where the idea of an offering of any kind, as made by them, can have no place, and can therefore admit of no

with God, the truly existing and therefore the Holy One. The relation of the soul in the sacrificial blood to the soul of the offerer is thus certainly that of substitution, for the describing of which the words *avri* and *loco* may be used, however little anything of this kind occurs in the law-text itself; but this substitution is no formal interchange of parts, no outward, real thing of that kind, but symbolical—so that the offering-act, if it did not truly become, on the part of the offerer, the thing which it was to set forth, was an empty and useless display."—Bähr's *Symbolik*, vol. ii. p. 210.

symbol? If it be said, 'It simply means their consecration to God'—No, I answer, it does not simply mean this. For we are expressly told that it means the covering up (or atoning for) something which they have contracted through vicinity to man. And until that is put away, they are not fit, it seems, for consecration. But above all, what can be the idea intended by covering *sin* itself? If atoning for a *man* means 'engaging that he shall devote his heart to God,' what can the atoning for *sin* mean? The scapegoat, and the articles in the tabernacle, were certainly capable of consecration in their own way. But what shall we say about *sin*? There it can only be a covering up—so as entirely to put away the thing—that is contemplated. And what else can it be that the same phrase, when referring to the same great subject, indicates anywhere? If, in short, 'atone' be equivalent to 'reconcile' (in the sense alleged), then it would be as unreasonable to speak of 'atoning sin' as of 'reconciling sin'! Who, then, does not recognize in all this that grand distinction between the right and the wrong which shows itself in the hopeless confusion of error, as contrasted with the unimpeachable consistency and accuracy of truth?

And if such be the inevitable conclusion from the meaning of the word 'atone,' no less important is the actual application of the atoning blood; as, for example, when Moses reared the altar under the mount, and sprinkled the blood at once upon the altar, the people, and the book. (Exodus xxiv. 6, 8; *cf.* Heb. ix. 19.) Now, everything here is plain, and falls into its right place at once, so long as we regard the blood after the simple view that naturally suggests itself. There is, first, the altar receiving its share; but the altar is God's

table; what goes to it goes to Him. (Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17, 21; Mal. i. 7.) And so, if He asks for a certain satisfaction to justice on account of human guilt—and if that satisfaction is furnished through the taking away of life—then the sprinkling of the blood upon His altar does yield to Him what He seeks—not a satisfaction, indeed, substantial or sufficient in itself—but significant of one that is;—thus *covering over* the demand, or, as we say, ‘making atonement.’ Next, the book is sprinkled. But that, in one great aspect, is just another name for the divine law. That, like the altar, has its demands; and, by the sprinkling of the blood upon it, there is a meeting of the demand—a covering up of the sentence as recorded against human transgression. Lastly, the people; they too are sprinkled—the meaning of which, at least, is sufficiently distinct; it is life given for life, death met and put away by death; such is the ‘covering over’ or ‘atoning’ in this respect. Thus, with the harmony ever attendant upon truth, does the application of the blood stand out as one distinct, consistent thing, even under forms so various. But if, on the other hand, we take ‘atone for’ as equivalent to ‘reconcile’ (the offering of the blood being still regarded as symbolizing that of the offerer’s heart) then—the applicability of the rite as regards the *people* being granted—what possible connection can an act like the one in question have with the altar and the book? What reconciling of them—what offering of them to God was either needed or accomplished? Nor will it affect the illustrative value of the case to urge that the word ‘atone’ is not used in connection with it. True, the mere word is not used; but the case is clearly one of that character; and is directly employed by the writer to “the

Hebrews" in the settling of the cardinal point that, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 19, 22.)

And thus we have 'atonement' under the idea of 'covering'—showing the utter want of analogy between *it* as a figure, and the offering to God of the worshipper's new life as a fact. For not only would the 'covering' of itself contradict such a design; but especially the covering of such various objects, including the worshipper and sin. And, more than that, we have not only 'covering' to deal with, but 'sprinkling,' *i.e.*, covering *with the view of cleansing*, or *clearing away*; for such is undoubtedly the thing expressed by sprinkling in the Old Testament. Are we to believe, then, that the *sprinkling* of blood upon a man, and still more upon those other things, represents the man's *pouring out* of his heart, or giving up of his life in service to God? Where, then, is the congruity of figures? Where is that suggestion of substance which symbol is always expected to convey? Where is the matchless accuracy which, the more we investigate them, the more we discover of in these ordinances?—an accuracy which seems so well to bear out the oft-recurring assertion that "the Lord spake unto Moses." And how is it that, with all the readiness of the Old Testament writers to express their deepest thoughts in ceremonial language, there never is the hint that they so regarded the sprinkling, or even the pouring out of the blood? Thus we have the peace-offering, under various forms, as well as the burnt-offering, employed as either the associate, or the symbol, of spiritual affection and service.* But never

* For example, Ps. xx. 3, May He remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt-sacrifice; lxvi. 13-15, I will go into Thy house with

sin or trespass-offering, and never any application of blood. That is ever used for its one purpose of *covering up* and *putting away*; never abused to express the idea of any one coming forth to the light, and declaring—‘Lord, here am I—to be Thine in repentance and obedience—even to all that is in my heart; and let this ‘covering’ blood, as now presented for me by the priest, be the symbol of my consecration, the expression of my heart’s entire love!’ The sentiment would be excellent, the ceremony absurd. The whole idea, in fact, is nothing but an inverting or perverting of figures—confused, unmeaning, grotesque.*

It would be superfluous, after this, to insist further on the meaning of ‘atone for’ in connection with the ordinary sacrifices already referred to. But there is still one object among the wonderful devices of the Old Testament worship too prominent to be overlooked. I allude to the *Mercy-seat*, or, in the happy expression of the Septuagint, the *Propitiatory Covering*.

Within “the holiest of all,” where Israel’s God, enthroned between the cherubim, was supposed peculiarly to dwell—just under the feet of the great King, stood the Ark of the Covenant. It contained the two tables

burnt-offerings; I will offer to Thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats; cxviii. 27, Bind the sacrifice with cords even to the horns of the altar; cxix. 108, Accept I beseech Thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth; cx. 3, Thy people shall be freewill offerings in the day of Thy power.

* The only instance that I remember of any sacrificial *outpouring* being employed to represent spiritual self-sacrifice is where Paul speaks of his own death under the figure of a libation, namely *of wine*, as added to the sacrifice of the church’s faith—thus Phil. ii. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 6. As to the pouring out of a victim’s blood representing in any way the outpouring of his heart, the thought seems never to have occurred to him.

of stone, as given to Moses on the mount, and engraven by the Sovereign's own hand with the perfect law for the guidance of His subjects. All this was entirely natural; for where the Lawgiver is, must His law be. But then the subject has to appear before his King on this very spot. And, though such visits occur but seldom, yet the creature who comes to worship is one who has sinned, and for whom the entrance into such a presence must be a very solemn and critical step. See, then, the provision. *There* dwells the Lawgiver with His great law, and *here*, on the day of atonement, comes the worshipper, Israel's high priest. Passing through the holy place, he draws aside the vail, and finds himself face to face with the Lawgiver. But this man is both a sinner himself, and the representative of a sinful people. What, then, can the law within that ark say even to a high priest but this—'O man, thou art a sinner, and for thy sins must die?' The law, in short, can forget neither what the man has so unrighteously done against it, nor what it is so righteously bound to do to him. How, then, shall he approach? The law must be *covered up*—that is the prime necessity; so that, while remaining there as a witness for God, it may not be as the Judge's sword to strike down the man. But is it not covered already, whilst that solid plate of shining gold shuts up the tables with their condemning words? May not the priest now move about with safety—the tinkling bells proclaiming to the outside company that all is well within? Not yet. It wants another covering than gold to assure the visitor that the law shall not burst out from under that, and deal with him as he deserves. Yes, it needs for this another covering; and such at the Lawgiver's

bidding, has the man now brought with him. It is the blood of the sin-offering which had just been slain. Upon the golden lid he sprinkles it; when instantly—in addition to the costly but ineffectual covering already upon that—there falls on ark and law together a sacrificial vail which forms a *propitiatory covering* absolutely inviolable. And, as it falls, there seems to issue from within the Holiest this voice—‘Thou demandest my life, O holy law! and thou doest rightly; I confess my guilt, I admit thy claim. But now, at the word of the great King, I bring another blood than my own—a blood in which is a life innocent as mine is guilty; and, behold, I spread forth this, that thy great demand may be covered over; and that I, with all my guilt, may stand upright before thee.’

Thus, by divine arrangement, lives the man who by that very law was sentenced to die. Only thus can I imagine any means by which the golden *covering* became *propitiatory*. And as this, above all things, serves to throw light upon the great charter of sacrifice, it may be worth our earnest consideration, both as a grand instance of the harmony of truth, and as one of the clearest lessons upon Atonement contained in the Bible.

CHAPTER IX.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ATONEMENT.

(OLD TESTAMENT—CONTINUED.)

THERE are several cases in which the word that we have been considering is employed, without any reference to atoning blood. Let us see whether we can find in them anything at variance with the principles here laid down; or whether, on the contrary, they do not all confirm our view.

Thus Jacob, after arranging the princely gift for his brother, says, "I will *appease him* with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me." ("I will cover his face with the present; afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept of my face."—Gen. xxxii. 20.) Such are the precise expressions. That is to say, Jacob will set up the present before Esau's face—the present, in the first instance, instead of himself; hoping that, through this medium, he may be able comfortably to look at Esau's face, and Esau at his. It is clearly a case of 'atonement' in the strict sense. One thing is given up, that it may act as a covering on behalf of the giver; yes, that it may serve instead of another thing which it is all-important to retain. And, though the matter is one which does not require or admit of blood, yet would neither the mode of operation nor the meaning

of the language be different if blood as shed, instead of a costly present of animals, were the 'covering' medium.

It is in the same sense that the word is used when we read—"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged" (covered, Prov. xvi. 6). Now, as to the *doctrine* of atonement, this statement might give rise to difficulty; but, as to the *language*, there can be none. Mercy and truth come *in the place of iniquity*; and thus iniquity is *covered*, and put out of the way: such is the plain statement. Just suppose, then, the same sort of statement made, as it constantly is made, in regard to the atoning blood, would not the meaning be precisely the same? As to the special truth conveyed in the present proverb, it need not peculiarly concern us now. It may relate to that temporal dealing which we have already seen so much of in the Old Testament. Or it may be taken in the most practical way, as expressing the fact that mercy and truth do come in place of iniquity, and so drive it away. It is just as when the haughty king is exhorted to "break off his sins by righteousness." (Dan. iv. 27.) But then, if this had been the way in which a sinner was to get pardon and acceptance with his God, it would have needed no blood of lambs to procure it, much less the blood of "the Lamb of God." Enough for us at present to have such an illustration of the meaning of the expression.

Again we read, "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged" (covered, Isa. xxvii. 9). By what? By the affliction going before. That shall come between the offenders and further chastisement. The punishment that has already been shall be *instead of more*, and thus shall *cover up* the offence. Is not this the meaning of the language? And would not the meaning, I again

ask, be the same if, instead of affliction, the covering material were of sacrificial blood? That it is so in our case will not be denied. It is only the sense of the 'covering' that is so strangely disputed. And in order to fix that sense these witnesses are now called.

The same principle will help us in other important cases. Thus, after the sin with the golden calf, Moses says—"Now will I go unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement (cover over) for your sin." (Exodus xxxii. 30, 32.) It was only, of course, a peradventure on his part; nor need we suppose that the mode of the desired atonement was quite clear to him. But one thing is clear, he begs of God to *forgive* (to put away) their sin; and what he means by this cannot be doubtful, so long as we will allow any of men's commonest notions to remain undisturbed. But then there is an alternative; the offended Sovereign may not see fit to forgive; it may be needful for Him rather to make a display of His justice. For this, too, Moses is prepared—"If not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book." And this he feels would be *atonement*; he will give himself for his people—his life for their life—yes, his *instead of* theirs, in a sense as strict as the words ever bore. Thus would he *cover over*, as he fondly hopes, the death-sentence now on its way against the transgressors. But in vain. Neither by the offer of his own life, nor by any other means, can Moses prevail to atone; and so he must carry back with him his 'peradventure'; for thus stands the sentence, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, *him will I blot out of my book.*" But what now if Messiah is said to have done—and on the very same terms—what Moses could not do! If we believe

that the proposal of the one was rejected, and no place found, through his atoning blood, for any Israelite in the book of temporal life—shall we not, in the same sense and for the same reason, believe that the proposal of the other was accepted, and that through His blood we do get our names into the book of the life everlasting?

Then there is the atonement on the occasion of Korah's rebellion—"Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses had commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed." (Numb. xvi. 46-48.)

Now here one or two things are plain. (1) There is no question about making the people morally good, but simply about the instant averting of wrath, the staying of the plague, and saving of life. Such was clearly the object, whatever the mode of the *atonement*. (2) The whole had to be done with the utmost possible haste—such haste as did not even permit to bring a victim and offer sacrifice, but required that that which was at hand should be caught up, and made use of on the spot. And what should that be but the altar-fire—the same which had consumed the morning sacrifice—of which the ashes were still among these glowing embers, ready to send up the priestly incense in its own smoke toward heaven? This was the nearest of everything to the sacrifice—being actually a portion of it,

and deriving from it its whole virtue. Is it wonderful if, in such circumstances, that altar-fire was counted worthy to represent the burnt-offering itself—an offering which that very morning had been “accepted to make atonement”? And, to complete the matter, what more was wanted than that God’s high priest, Israel’s representative, should take it up? And “*he* stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.” How very urgent the case was appears sufficiently from the statement, “Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred.”

Another instance of the application of altar-fire may assist in our appreciating such a transaction. It is where the prophet exclaims, “Woe is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.” His fear evidently is lest he be cut off, and it is to relieve him of such apprehension that the divine messenger is sent—“Then flew one of the seraphim, with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged” (covered, Isa. vi. 5–7). To see the significance of this it is only needful to take into account what has just been said of the altar-fire.

The next case seems to want every element of a sacrificial kind, and has been much relied on by some, for establishing what may be called the purely moral view of atonement. One writer, whose work has met with a remarkable degree of favour,* actually takes the

* “Nature of the Atonement,” by Dr. J. M. Campbell. “The weighty work of Dr. Campbell, in our own day, may be thought to

case as (in connection with certain words in the fortieth Psalm) furnishing a scriptural basis for something like a new theory on the subject. That theory is "the important distinction between an atonement for sin, and substituted punishment;" the case being the one where Phinehas executes justice upon the two transgressors, after the matter of Baalpeor—so that instantly, after four-and-twenty thousand have already perished, the plague is stayed. The service done is thus told:—"Phinehas hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore he shall have the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement (covered over) for the children of Israel." (Num. xxv. 11-13.) The argument is this—that as it was not personal suffering on the part of Phinehas or of the Israelites, but entirely his meritorious zeal, which secured the designed end—so this is the true method of explaining the Christian atonement. "There can be no uncertainty," says the writer,* "as to the atoning element here. It was not the mere death of the subjects (? objects) of the act of Phinehas. Had they died by the plague, their death would have been no atonement . . . But the moral element in the transaction . . . the mind of Phinehas . . . his zeal for God . . . his sympathy in God's judgment on sin, this was the atonement, this its essence."

Now, suppose we consent to take the matter in this extremely partial manner—suppose we allow that there

leave little to be contributed to the elucidation of this doctrine."—Bishop Ewing.

* See as above, third edition, p. 120.

was no sacrificial atonement made *in addition to the zeal* of the man—suppose we think it right to dispense with all the direct instruction afforded by the Old Testament upon ‘atonement’—and, ignoring that, to rest upon an application like this of sacrificial language—taking the matter even thus, what does it amount to? Simply, that Phinehas was zealous for his God, and thus made atonement for the people. Be it so—and what does this imply? On the one hand, we find a great national evil just perpetrated, and calling down a corresponding judgment; on the other, we have the cause of righteousness sternly vindicated by a bold deed on the part of the high priest’s son—this in itself constituting a great national virtue. And now, after the vengeance already taken—now, when “all the men that followed Baalpeor” either have been, or are to be destroyed (Deut. iv. 3)—God allows the zealous act of the one to bar the way against further judgment upon the many. He accepts of the summary execution of the chief transgressors in lieu of further chastisement; and thus it becomes a *cover*, or ‘atonement for’ the evil. And what more fit? The whole matter is one of national administration—public vindication of the divine purity; and now, through the deed of Phinehas, at that stage of the affair, the vindication is complete. Such is literally the whole transaction. Such is the moral value of the judgment executed, all things being fairly considered.

But now suppose that Phinehas had been said to *die for the people, to bear their sins, to give his life for them, to give himself a ransom for them, to atone for them by his own blood*—the result of this still being what the result of his zeal was—then what, I ask, would his atonement have really been? And yet such, or any

single article of it, would be the only true type or parallel of the Christian atonement. Marvellous, indeed, that the case of Phinehas should be used in a way that would be warrantable only if he had been said to make atonement by his *death*; and the work of Christ be treated as if He, on His part, had been spoken of as atoning for us by *His zeal*! Yes, and to tell us that the "Old Testament sheds a ray of light on the distinction between making an atonement for sin, and bearing the punishment of sin!"—and this "incident in the history of Israel" is that ray! Extraordinary indeed—if the view in question (the "distinction" already noticed,) should furnish the true key to the Christian atonement—while yet of that key no solitary glimpse should have been afforded to us by all the Mosaic ordinances! Extraordinary that a thing of such moment should have been consigned to one passing word in the narrative of a very horrible event! Is it strange if we can only regard such "a ray of light" as a most pernicious darkness? Alas for the Mosaic sacrifices, and their typical importance, if they signified no more than this esteemed writer teaches! "They indicated," says he, "the necessity for an atonement, and in some sense its form, but they did not, for they could not, reveal its nature." [Most truly, *they* did not, and could not, reveal any such 'nature' as that thus alleged. And what *they* taught about either the *necessity* or the *form* of *such* an atonement is hard to perceive.] "In no real sense did the confession of the sins of the people over the victim connect those sins with it, or lay them upon it; for in no real sense could it bear them." [If by 'real' we are to understand, positive, substantial, effectual—then, of course, we agree. But the question, we thought, was

one of shadow and idea—and what of that there was traceable in ‘Moses.’] “In the Epistle to the Hebrews (he continues) it is not upon the coincidence between the type and the antitype, but upon that in which they differ that the Apostle insists.” [Now we always knew that shadows and pictures differed greatly from their counterparts; but still we thought that their real value lay, not in their difference, but in their coincidence.]

Finally, it is of importance that we take note of the very utmost that was involved in the atonement of Phinehas. It is to be hoped, indeed, that the moral influence of his brave deed was salutary in the extreme; but that was not the atonement. The atonement was neither more nor less than a “turning away of the wrath of God”—a driving back of the death that was on the march. There is nothing here of what so many take for the only reconciliation of man to God—nothing in the way of man’s changing his mind, and coming round to God’s; for the whole view is just one of the divine Being changing, if not His mind, yet certainly His action towards the rebellious people. And thus, even if I could forget that ‘atone’ means to ‘cover over,’ and could take up with a looser view of this than the Scripture allows me, I could never forget that ‘atonement,’ whether as effected by Phinehas in the wilderness, or proposed by Moses on the mount, implies very decidedly a change of judicial action on the part of God.

There is still a case of much importance to be considered, on account of its connection with a certain passage in the New Testament. It is this—“When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after

their number, then shall they give every man a ransom (cover) for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there may be no plague among them when thou numberest them. . . . The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls. And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls." (Exod. xxx. 12-16.)

Now it is sufficiently remarkable that there should be such a constant ransoming of life prescribed by one means or other. But of the fact there can be no doubt. Nothing can be plainer than that such a thing is directly required here as a security against the plague. The sum imposed, trifling as it is in itself, is understood to be of the nature of a *ransom* for lives that are in danger. And that ransom is represented under the figure of a *covering over*. It is to be specially noticed also that the deliverance secured is not from any habits of sin, but simply from the inroad of death. Just one more element in the case remains, namely, that the money is "for the service of the tabernacle," and thus becomes "a memorial to the children of Israel, to make atonement for them." Thus the Israelite connects himself in the most direct manner with God and His house. As a "memorial" of that connection the ransom money is applied.* And, thus applied, it puts the man into such

* It is an extremely interesting relic of this ancient appointment that we meet with, when the collectors of the "tribute money" enquire of Peter whether his Master holds Himself chargeable or not. But

a relation to the Most High as serves for the ‘ransoming,’ of his life, or the ‘covering’ of it from the action of a charge which otherwise must have been fatal. Is not this the plain and certain sense of the arrangement? I do not say it is the *gospel*; but if it be the *law*, that is only what we might expect here. And if it gives us the meaning of ransom, or *atonement*, then we must thankfully accept it, and honestly apply the meaning wherever else we may find the thing. For example, if in another place we are told that that is done to us by the blood of Christ which was done to the Israelite through silver and gold—then what have we to do but conclude that the ransom, or atonement, is as real a thing in the one case as ever it was in the other—as real and direct a means of saving us from a death which was as real, however much more dreadful? We should certainly allow that, if a man was said to ransom his life with his own money, it was meant that he gave his money instead of his life. For this is exactly what took place in another of the legal prescriptions. The owner of an ox which had killed a man “was to be put to death.” But there was an alternative. “If a ransom (*copher*, λύτρα) be laid on him, then he shall give, for the ransom of his life, (λύτρα τῆς ψυχῆς) whatsoever is laid upon him.” (Exod. xxi. 30.) And now, if it were said that the life was ransomed not by the man’s own money, but by the blood of another, this, however it would affect the means of the ransom would make no change in the meaning of the thing.

the one point that now concerns us is, when Jesus says—“That take, and give unto them for (ἀντὶ) me and thee.” (Matt. xvii. 27.) This word, ‘instead of’ would be unintelligible except as pointing to the old idea of *ransom*.

In conclusion, it will be enough just to notice that peculiar, but interesting, use of 'atonement money' which we meet with on another occasion. It was when a body of 12,000 Israelites went out to take vengeance on the Midianites for their wicked behaviour, and, after having very terribly fulfilled the charge, returned without the loss of a man. "We have therefore" (say they, for it is entirely their own thought) "brought an oblation for the Lord, what every man hath gotten . . . to *make an atonement for* our souls before the Lord." (Num. xxxi. 50.) To us, the thing presents rather the appearance of a thank-offering; while *they* seem to have regarded it as a ransom for life preserved, engaged beforehand, and now falling to be discharged.

There is still one very peculiar case in which we find atonement connected with the use of oil as well as of blood. It is the cleansing of the leper in Lev. xiv. 18, 29. Upon which I remark—(1) There is no mention here of atonement *for sin*. (2) There has been already an ample use of sin, trespass, and other offerings, for the usual atonement (7, 12, 19–22, 24, 31). (3) The oil spoken of as used for atonement is so combined with these offerings as to present the view of its being only partially instrumental for that end at all. And (4) it is of consequence to notice the real peculiarity of the case. It seems remarkable that nowhere else except in the consecration of the priest (Lev. viii. 23, 24, 30), is there anything like it in the Mosaic ordinances. And what can the relationship be but just that the leper, after having been shut out from his proper position as a member of the "kingdom of priests" (Ex. xix. 6), is, on the day of his cleansing, restored to it? In this way would the oil, which peculiarly signified priestly conse-

eration, serve to 'atone for' or 'cover over' the *blank or defect which had arisen in the leper's history*. And thus it would harmonize with the trespass-offering, which was never prescribed except in cases of injury, or loss inflicted, as calling for compensation. On the same principle, we should account for it that the oil is not connected with 'atoning' in the priest's case, because no defect had ever occurred in that respect. For the same reason there is no need of trespass-offering there; but, on the contrary, the ceremony commences with the anointing oil, instead of, as in the leper's case, with blood-shedding.

After all this from the LAW, we may consider, for a moment, how the same system is carried out in the PROPHETS.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation (atone-ment or covering) for iniquity." (Dan. ix. 24.) If the foregoing explanation of this last expression has not won conviction, we have nothing more to offer here. If it has, then let this be read in that light; and, together with it, that which forms the channel of the whole blessing—"After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off."

Or, calling to mind what we have met with above about sin-bearing, and pouring out of the life-blood, let us ponder what we read in that greatest of prophecies in regard to the atoning Saviour. (Isa. liii.)

"He was wounded for our transgressions,* He was

* Theodoret says here—"He being pure from sins sustained for us the punishment" (ὁ πέμεινεν τὰς τιμωρίας).

bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." [This looks like substitution; does the following confirm or remove the impression?] "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." [By which it surely *seems* designed to represent us as guilty, and worthy of punishment; and what else than the direct removal of that guilt and punishment can it be that the following expresses?] "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all." [Laid upon Him how?] "He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was He stricken." [Is this not sufficiently plain; then what means the following?] "When Thou shalt make (or when His soul shall make) an offering for sin, He shall see His seed." [It is of consequence to know that the expression here is *trespass-offering*—the one of all the offerings most distinctly connected with *moral offences*, as pointed out above—and always associated with compensation for injury done—a payment, in fact, with full interest. And now, in consequence of this], "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied; by His knowledge shall my servant, the Righteous One, justify many." Now, if we will only take the word 'justify,' according to its very clear sense in the Old Testament, as the opposite of 'condemn,' what choice have we but to regard this as expressing that He will, in the most direct manner, clear them of guilt? And how can we doubt that this really is, as it ought to be, the sense, when we find the reason or ground of it thus expressed?] "For He shall *bear* their iniquities." [For if there be one thing plain in the whole of the Mosaic ceremonies, it is surely the sense of this expression. How, in fact, is it possible fairly

to doubt that it means—He shall be answerable for the sin, or suffer the penal consequence of it? But now it is because of His so doing, that the Messiah, by the knowledge of Himself, procures justification for many. And yet, as if all this were inadequate to express the grand truth, it must be thus reiterated], “He hath poured out His soul unto death.” [Yes, here is ‘pouring out;’ here is the life-blood flowing forth, till the last drop of it is gone, and death has taken possession of the sufferer. And what this symbolizes—whether the model-consecration of one life, as a lesson and a power of consecration for others, or the giving away of a life in sacrifice, *for the ransoming of other lives*, and the justifying of the ransomed—let the passage itself, together with the whole law of Moses answer.] “And He was numbered with the transgressors, and HE BARE THE SIN OF MANY, and made intercession for the transgressors.” [These words must be left to speak for themselves now. We shall meet with them again.]

Before leaving the Old Testament, it would be wrong not to notice a few passages which have been much relied on, as correcting that false view of animal sacrifice which we are supposed to entertain. It is little symptomatic of a good and strong cause to rely upon such arguments.

Three passages from the Psalms will embrace all that is of importance in this respect. The first of these is *Psa. xl. 6–8*, “Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire . . . Lo I come . . . I delight to do Thy will.” Any one who has looked into the writings now animadverted on is aware of the amazing zest with which this passage is continually referred to. Now there might be some show of reason in pleading that this indicated

an approaching alteration as to the mode in which God would be served. It might signify, if we knew no more, the doing away with all kinds of external sacrifice, in favour of a purely spiritual service. But it is too unreasonable to ask us to believe, from this, that sacrifice never was anything else than a certain outward form or expression of that obedience to the divine will which is naturally incumbent on all. For the case is as clearly as possible one of contrast, not of coincidence, between these two things—the second of them being here represented as taking the place of the first, not the first explained by the second. The time was to be when the first, as already well understood, was to give place to the second, as not yet opened out. But amid all the change to be effected, and all the mystery involved in the undertaking, one thing was very certain; God's old appointment would never lose aught of its real meaning, and His new appointment would not fail to substantiate whatever had been shadowy in the old. Meanwhile, the shadow had well spoken for itself, and when the substance came, it would do its own work still better. The substance has come; and now the "doing of the will" appears in "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," even "one sacrifice for sins for ever." (Heb. x. 5–12.)

The next passage so much relied on is from Psalm l. 8–14. Two of the verses will give the substance of the argument—"I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds . . . Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High."

Now just observe that those here gathered to listen to God's judgment are actually spoken of as His "saints, who are making a covenant with Him by *sacrifice*;"

and further that, after all the severe rebuke for unholy sacrifice, there is a positive call to bring peace-offerings of two kinds; namely the *thank-offering*, and the *vow*. And, together with this, observe what the rebuke really is—reading the eighth verse in what seems the most natural sense, and the one that would best accord with the view opposed to us—“Shall I not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, and thy burnt-offerings, as in my sight continually?” And why? Because the offerers were actually regarding Jehovah as some hungry deity whom they could satiate with flesh and blood (12, 13)—and all the more because they might then with greater freedom go and satiate themselves with sin. (16–22.) It is such religion that God abhors; it is such practice that He condemns, while He still—yes even here, in spite of all the prostitution of it—calls for that class of offering, outward, but still sacred, which He Himself had ordained, and would not as yet abolish. If, in short, He meant, in this portion of His Word, to put an end to external sacrifice, then it seems that none of the true worshippers in succeeding times—including Hezekiah and Josiah, down to our Lord Himself—understood His meaning; nor that He Himself was otherwise than pleased with their mistake. But, in fact, there was no intention thus to discourage sacrifice, any more than there was to discourage prayer, when it was thundered in the ears of a hypocritical people—“When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; when ye make many prayers, I will not hear.” They too were indignantly asked—“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?” and peremptorily told—“Bring no more vain oblations; I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed

beasts." (Isa. i. 11-15.) Woe be to any who, after this, should venture to ask—"What, then, is the use of prayer?" Nor could it be well with those who might think—"And what is the use of sacrifice?"

And what shall we say of the royal penitent declaring—"Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it Thee; Thou delightest not in burnt-offering"? What can we say but just that he means devoutly to express what we know was the fact—that for such sins as his there was absolutely no sacrifice appointed;—nothing but mercy on the Sovereign's part, and on his the sacrifice of a broken spirit. And yet, even in such a mood, David cannot but implore for that divine blessing which will find its human counterpart in nothing short of the most lavish tangible oblations. "Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, build Thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering; then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar." (Ps. li. 16-19.)

CHAPTER X.

ON CERTAIN MODERN VIEWS OF THE ATONEMENT.

BEFORE proceeding to consider what the New Testament teaches of the substitutionary character of our Lord's death, it will be important to give some account of certain wide-spread views, in which everything of that kind is earnestly denied. The doctrine, indeed, so generally maintained among Christians on the subject has of late met with an extraordinary amount of opposition. Nor is it from professed unbelievers or Unitarians that this comes, but from those who are regarded as holding various points of Christ's truth in common with their neighbours. It is they who are now moving so zealously to expunge from the Christianity of the future that which they consider as so serious a blot on the Christianity of the past. It is they who represent the 'substitution' so long believed in as nothing better than a fiction and an absurdity; speaking of it—or listening with satisfaction to those who do—as an evil thing which, like the sin of Eli's sons, "makes the offering of the Lord to be abhorred." It is a doctrine, we are told, which would "make God the servant of His own edicts"—a device for "satisfying the dead and indiscriminating law of God, instead of His love and righteousness, worse than fanciful, because it sets a

* J. Ll. Davies, "Work of Christ," p. 9.

Law or Fate above God Himself; and inverts that idea of justice which God has taught us to reverence and to imitate.”* Hence, instead of being welcomed as a provision for the dispensation of pardon, it is represented as precluding the idea of genuine pardon altogether, on the ground of its “professing freely to remit a debt to one party, only after it has been fully paid by another.” We are represented as holding that agony, as such, can satisfy God; and then we are told most truly, but upon a most false issue, “Agony does not satisfy God; agony only satisfied Moloch. Nothing satisfies God but the voluntary sacrifice of love.”† “Nothing ever can, or ever ought, to dissuade the human heart from believing that, if once it can be utterly and profoundly penitent, a free pardon from God is *certain*, and always was certain, and needed no ‘forensic arrangement’ of any sort to make it more certain;”—nothing, in short, of what amounts to “the hideous and pagan theory that infinite justice must inflict some punishment *somewhere* for every violation of law; but whether on the offender or on a voluntary proxy is comparatively unimportant.”‡ “We have proclaimed,” says another,|| “the sacrifice of Thy Son, so that men have mistaken it for one of those sacrifices which they offer to win cruel and evil gods to their side, to secure immunity for their base doings and dark thoughts, to keep them from making inquisition for the blood which the earth conceals.” Or, to give one instance more, we are presented by a distinguished writer with the picture of an injured parent met by one

* Two Sermons. Preface.

† F. W. Robertson, Sermons, Second Series, p. 301.

‡ R. H. Hutton, “Theological Essays,” p. 372.

|| “Meditations and Prayers,” in Bishop Ewing’s “Present Day Papers.”

claiming to be a vicarious sufferer, in the way that *we are supposed to regard God as having been met by the atonement*—and whose exclamation is simply, ‘Mockery ! misery !’ an exclamation in which we can heartily join, as regards the view there ascribed to us.

What, then, is the belief of the writers who thus exclaim against views which have so long prevailed ? If I say that they regard sin *merely* as a malady from which man has by fitting means to be delivered, some will freely admit that it is so ; others will perhaps tell me that I am misjudging them. And yet I cannot make out, in the teaching of any of them, amid all the cloud of words, any actual element distinct from this. Be it so, however, that it does in any case involve more, yet their idea of the deliverance seems persistently to ignore it. Thus, according to them, the Incarnation and Sacrifice of Christ took place as affording the most perfect exhibition at once of man’s duty and God’s mind. Thus has God come down to man simply that He might lift up man to Himself. Thus has the Son of God, by identifying Himself with humanity in its sin and suffering, identified humanity with Himself in His righteousness, and united man to God in love and obedience. Thus by the sacrifice of Himself, as the great representative man, He has presented mankind to God as an acceptable offering. Thus, moreover, in Christ Jesus we have God Himself “suffering, and making self-denials, for the spiritual good of man,* so that, by

* See “Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation,” chap. xv. Thus, as we there read, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself”—“that is, doing those things that would restore to Himself the obedience and affection of every one that believed.” Thus “the atone-

the power of His love, He may conquer the power of our enmity. Thus would our Heavenly Father "heap coals of fire on our head." Thus "would He break the back-bone of our rebellion." Thus, by prescribing the outpouring of the sacrificial blood, He would show us that there is nothing really acceptable to Him but the sacrifice of the creature's heart and life. And thus only can our sin be truly said to be "put away," because thus only do we cease from the practice of it. And now, the cause being removed, the effect ceases. God *was* displeased with the rebel, and *that* was death. He *is* pleased with the penitent, and this is as truly life. And thus—inasmuch as our Saviour, by His wonderful self-devotion, has so operated upon us as to bring us to repentance and to God—He can most truly be said to have *died for our sins*. "It is only by rendering true penitence *possible*, by emancipating us from the despair of human weakness, through the revelation of a divine power in whose might we may trample on sin and death . . . that the death of Christ can set us free."*

In all this there is, of course, very much of truth. There is one truth, however, apart from which, to our mind, all others have no value and no reality—but which alas! has no place here. Nor can we get quit of the feeling that that truth, because of a certain deep dislike with which it is regarded, has its rightful crown torn off, and put upon the head—it may be of real friends, or of jealous rivals—but none of which, except

ment of Christ produces the necessary effect upon the human soul, in restoring it to affectionate obedience." And such, in spite of a free use of evangelical phrases, is literally *the whole theory* of atonement, as contained in a book which enjoyed, even with evangelical people, so remarkable a degree of favour some years ago.

* R. H. Hutton, "Theological Essays," p. 372.

for their relation to it, would ever have been heard of as elements in the gospel of God's grace.

But now, to let these writers speak more explicitly for themselves.

Thus Mr. Maurice writes on 2 Cor. v. 21, to show in what sense "Christ was made sin for us"—"The giving up of His Son to take upon Him their flesh and blood, to enter into their sorrows, to feel and suffer for their sins; that is, *to be made sin*: the perfect sympathy of the Son with His loving will towards His creatures; His entire sympathy with them, and union with them; His endurance in His inmost heart and spirit of that evil which He abhorred; this is God's method of reconciliation; by this He speaks to the sinful will of man; by this He redeems it, raises it, restores it. The acts which express His love to man; the acts by which the Son of God proves Himself to be the Son of man; these are the means of destroying the barrier between heaven and earth, between the Father and the children; the means of taking away the sin of the world. In each man the sin—the alienation and separation of heart—ceases, when he has a Father who has loved him, and given His Son for him; when he confesses that this Son is stronger to unite him with his Father and his brethren than sin is to separate them; when he is sure that the Spirit of the Father and of the Son will be with him to resist all the efforts of the spirit of enmity and division to renew the strife." *

On the same passage Mr. Davies writes—"It is a strong expression, but it does not say that our punishment was inflicted upon Christ. God identified Him

* "Doctrine of Sacrifice," p. 195.

with us sinners in our sin, so far as One, Himself sinless, could be so identified; and it was that very sinlessness, be it remembered, His pure and holy love, which rendered it possible for Him to be made so closely one with us; and this was in order that we might be identified with Him in His righteousness. He shared our sin, in the sense of it, in sorrow for it, in a vicarious confession of it, that we might be reconciled through such a Saviour to our Father, and might share His righteousness, in its faith and filial fellowship with God. By thus giving up His Son, God manifested His divine glory in its infinitely touching aspect towards ourselves. He was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself."

Again, to show that Christ is more than an Example to us—"If the Father of Jesus Christ is our Father; if Jesus Christ is our Head and Representative, the root of our life, and the type of our perfection; such a manifestation as His yielding Himself to a hated death for our sake is a power of atonement which ought to be irresistible. Through Him we may come to the perfect Father. In Him we see the Father's longsuffering and forgiveness. In Him we see our own claim to the Father's favour. In Him we behold God stooping to the ground to raise us from our degradation, and setting us upright in His favour. In Him we see God justifying us freely, accepting us in our unworthiness, as His own children. In Him we see our own nature bearing itself rightly towards the Father, all but despairing because of the wickedness of sin, conquering despair by trust, because of the goodness of Him whom we have offended."*

* "Word of Reconciliation." By J. Ll. Davies, p. 23.

To the same purpose—"We are all members of one body, sharing together, suffering together. The Son of God is the Head of this vast body. He is revealed as a voluntary sufferer—not seeking His own—bearing in love and sympathy the burden of men's sins and miseries. Suffering is thus glorified—it ceases to be penal only [is it penal at all?]; and we have a revelation of it as a power which unites us to God and to one another.—In Him, Son of God, and Son of man, we see ourselves as we ought to be—as God has made us before we marred ourselves . . . we are personally reconciled to the Father in proportion as the sacrifice of the Son becomes the moving law of our life."*

Once more, "The incarnation of such a person—the Eternal Son of God—His being tried as we are, yet without sin, and therefore bearing all our sins; His victory over evil and the evil spirit; His yielding to death and triumphing over it; His absolute doing of the Father's will; His offering Himself without spot to God—are the atonement and redemption of men—because He is what He is, and because men are related to Him as by God's creation they are related to Him. And this is the view expanded to a universal scope, which is to be found in all the Pauline Epistles. Wherever St. Paul is setting forth broadly the message of atonement through the cross, he states as the ground of it the mystery of creation or constitution in Christ. And because Christ, who is our Head and Archetype, manifested Himself through sacrifice, therefore all human duty is seen to be sacrifice, and sacrifice to be the one duty of man."†

* Tracts for Priests and People, xiii. p. 47–50.

† J. Ll. Davies, "Remarks on Jowett's Comment. on St. Paul," p. 76.

We may now turn to the sentiments of a very distinguished man, which no doubt have greatly tended to the present state of feeling in England. "That masterly dissertation (says a sympathizing writer) of Coleridge in 'Aids to Reflection,'* has probably told largely on men's thoughts in our day. . . . According to Coleridge, Christ's work on our behalf is never *named* from anything *in itself*, but from its *effects upon us*. The *analogies* to sacrifice, redemption, satisfaction of a debt, forgiveness of sins are all to be sought *in those effects*, never *in their cause*."†

Now the importance of this view, true or false, cannot be overrated. For, according to it, whenever we are spoken of in Scripture as pardoned or redeemed, the meaning is that we are simply *said to be so, on account of a certain effect* as produced upon us by certain means—that *effect* being the one which usually does follow, or perhaps should follow, the action of the cause seemingly assigned—without the least design to teach that the *cause is* the same. That is to say, an effect, not named at all perhaps on the occasion, is everything; and the cause expressly named is nothing. With the effect alone we have to do—the alleged cause not being the real cause, but only introduced for convenient illustration; because, in ordinary affairs, the same sort of antecedent leads to results analogous to those set before us in the

* See pp. 263-273, ed. 1854.

† Rev. F. Garden, in "Tracts for Priests and People," No. iii. Mr. Garden allows that it may be so in three out of the four cases—but not in that of *sacrifice*. What ground he has for this distinction it is not easy to see. It would rather seem as if Coleridge must be altogether right, or altogether wrong—as he gives just one reason (and there can be no pretence of any other) for the four points in common.

present case. And this is the substance of the view contained in that 'masterly dissertation'!

Let us hear the writer himself—"Had you involved yourself in a heavy debt for gewgaws meats drinks apparel, and, in default of payment, made yourself over as a bondman to a hard creditor who would enforce the bond to the last tittle, with what emotions would you not receive the tidings that a stranger or a friend, . . . neglected by you, . . . had paid the debt, had made satisfaction to your creditor! But you have incurred a debt of death to the evil nature; you have sold yourself over to sin . . . and, relatively to you and all your means and resources, the seal on the bond is the seal of necessity. Its stamp is the nature of evil. But the stranger has appeared; the forgiving friend, even the Son of God from heaven; and to as many as have faith in His name, I say—The debt is paid for you—the satisfaction has been made." (p. 269.) An extraordinary mode of handling truth surely! By a *figure of speech* we are said to have incurred a debt of death to the evil nature. Christ came—as a *matter of fact*—to deliver us from the evil nature. Hence we may regard Him as having, by a figure, paid the debt for us—that is, as having engaged to free us from spiritual bondage; because, if we believe in Him, we shall find ourselves delivered, and shall love Him as our Deliverer. And such is the Gospel!

Let us look a little more narrowly at the illustration. It supposes a friend as standing forward to pay a debt; hence the gratitude of the debtor to him. And yet the entire design is to represent Christ, not as really paying any debt, but, by a very gracious treatment, delivering human souls from that bad moral condition

which may properly be spoken of as a bondage! There is no real payment in the matter, I say, because there is no one either to claim it or to receive it—the only party imagined in the case being just the sinner himself, with his evil nature. Is this, then, the sense in which we are to recognize the Redeemer as a forgiving Friend—that is, as a Friend who has no occasion to forgive—but simply acts as a most loving physician delivering from spiritual disease, and, by a figure of speech, is said to forgive, because the influence of forgiveness would in natural circumstances be analogous to the influence of healing in the spiritual? Is there, now, any respectable book in the world that men treat thus except the Bible? And is there any truth in the Bible that may not be got rid of on these terms? Say, for example, God's displeasure against sin;—but God cannot be displeased, says some one, with what He so permits and could prevent; such language is only used *as if He were displeased*! Or, the deity of Christ—that is impossible—the Bible only means to speak *as if He were divine*—the same result coming about in another way as if that were the cause of it! So the grossest antinomian might argue that sanctification means nothing but forgiveness of sin—because it acts in fostering peace of mind and preventing suffering, *as forgiveness would do*;—and therefore, when the one is spoken of, the other is meant!

What plea, then, is there for taking such a liberty with the words of Scripture? Because (it is said) St. Paul's object uniformly is to exhibit simply the *consequences* of redemption. But St. Paul is not the Scripture. And if he were, it is not the fact that he insists upon nothing but the consequences of redemption. He

speaks just as often, perhaps, of redemption by itself—without any reference to its results as regards deliverance from the evil nature. A very cursory glance at his epistles will suffice to show this. I need only point to such portions as Rom. iii. 20–30; iv. 4–8, 24, 25; v.; 1 Cor. xv. 3; Gal. iii. 10; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; 1 Thess. i. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; and Acts xiii. 38, 39.

And even were it so, as is alleged, that would not affect the conclusion. The question is—Whether the apostle speaks of forgiveness, ransom, substitution, in the direct sense of these words. And that question never can be negatived, on the ground that, in speaking of such matters, he connects an ulterior end with the act described. If I am said to pay some one's debt *in order that* he may commence an honest business—does that mean that I *have not paid the debt*, but have only instructed, urged, persuaded him to do rightly now;—the very remarkable language used about me being justified on the ground that the result is all the same *as if I had* paid the debt, with the design of moving the man to gratitude and diligence? Or, if I am said to ransom, by some appropriate means, the life of a youth, in order that he may use that ransomed life for the good of his family—does this mean that I do *not ransom* his life, but only induce him to live henceforth as a good son or brother? I ask again whether any book, or any speech, is ever thus interpreted *except the Bible*?

That I am in no way misrepresenting the view of the distinguished writer, the following extract will sufficiently show:

“A sum of a thousand pounds is due from James to Peter . . . James is ruined. . . . Matthew pays Peter, and discharges the bond. So far all is plain and right.

But, instead of this, suppose that James has been guilty of the worst of conduct to the best of mothers—the same friend steps in, and performs all the duties which James should have performed. Will this satisfy the mother's claims on James, or entitle him to her approbation and blessing? . . . Suppose the vicarious son to say, 'I trust you are appeased, and will be reconciled to James—I have satisfied all your claims . . . have paid his debt—and you are too just to require the same debt to be paid twice over . . . Mockery! misery! the mother exclaims. But suppose, on the other hand, that by example, persuasion, or additional and more mysterious influences, or by an inward co-agency on the part of Matthew . . . James should be led to repent—suppose that, through admiration and love of this great goodness gradually assimilating his mind to the mind of his benefactor, he should, in his own person, become a dutiful and grateful child—then doubtless the mother would be abundantly satisfied. But then the case is no longer a question of *things*, or a matter of debt payable by another; nevertheless the effect—and the reader will remember that it is the effect and consequence of Christ's mediation on which St. Paul is dilating—the effect to James is similar in both cases, that is, in the case of James the debtor, and James the undutiful son. In both cases he is liberated from a grievous burden, and in both he has to attribute his liberation to the act and free grace of another."

Now, whatever obscurity there might be about the previous extract, all is plain here. *One* thing is held to be *mentioned* as if *another* were *meant*. Vicarious words shall have all honour; while, for the "vicarious son" in any sense, there shall be nothing but ridicule. I only

add that, if there be any whose view agrees with that presented in the story of the mother and the two sons, they may well be ashamed of their theology, and allow us to join in the exclamation, Mockery ! Misery !

Another of the same class writes thus :*—"The truth of the expression 'died for all' is contained in this fact, that Christ is the representative of humanity—properly speaking, the reality of human nature. This is the truth contained in the emphatic expression, *Son of man*. What Christ did for humanity was done by humanity—because in the name of humanity. For a vicarious act does not supersede the principal's duty of performance, but rather implies and acknowledges it." He then gives, by way of illustration, the name 'vicar,' as originally conferred on that member of a monastery who was appointed to do the work of a cure, of which the revenue had fallen to the body, and thus proceeds—"Now, his service did not supersede theirs, but was a perpetual and standing acknowledgment that they, as a whole and individually, were under the obligation to perform it.† In the same way the act of Christ is the act of humanity—that which all humanity is bound to do.‡ His righteousness does not supersede our right-

* F. W. Robertson, Sermon VII., second series, on 2 Cor. v. 14.

† Of course, the members or heads of the company were bound to see the work done, so long as it continued in their hands; and, as thus bound, they appointed one of their number to do it *instead of themselves*. But, so long as he did it, they surely were not bound to do it too. Thus far the vicar was both the representative and substitute of the company. At length all recognition of this connection came to an end; and now the vicar—with whoever appoints him to the cure—is simply a party acting *instead of* a company which no longer exists.

‡ To the same effect De Wette says on 2 Cor. v. 14, "Christus

eousness ; nor does His sacrifice supersede our sacrifice. It is the representation of human life, and human sacrifice—vicarious for all, yet binding for all.” [Now, so far as this last statement *concerns the present question*, it has in it just the fallacy of the ‘vicar,’ as pointed out in the note. For, suppose some one to pay a certain debt for me, by which I am released from prison—that surely is vicarious in the full sense of the thing being done by him *in my stead*—so that I am no more liable *for that*. And yet I am still bound as much as ever to pay my debts, and owe no man anything ; because *in that sense* the deed was not intended to be vicarious. Of course, if any one should be my *vicar* to that extent, the case would be altered.]

Again—“Christ is the realized idea of our humanity. He is God’s idea of man completed.* On the other hand, it is, he urges, like supposing “a kind of figment or deception in the mind of God” to regard Christ’s

starb als derjenige, in welchem alle ihr wahres, reines Leben haben sollten, gleichsam als der Mensch an sich, oder das Haupt der Menschheit: sein um der Sünde Willen und Zur Vernichtung derselben erlittener Tod war also eben so wohl ein gemeinschaftlicher als das in ihm Zum Siege und Zur Herrschaft gelangende rein menschliche Leben. Oder Christus starb, indem er in seinem Bewusstsein die ganze Menschheit mit ihrem ganzem Wohl und Weh trug; mithin starb er anstatt aller, und alle in und mit ihm.”

* Such is a favourite thought of this writer. Thus he points to the grand ideal in art which is being continually striven after by those aiming at excellence. The same, he says, holds good in nature—a constant aiming and arriving at an ideal of perfection—a grand example of which appears, we are told, in the relation between polar and tropical vegetation. So in religion Christ is the ideal—our business being assimilation to Him. I need only say that the scientific illustration will be regarded by very few as anything better than a poetical idea ; and whether the view of the atonement thus suggested is anything else the Scripture must decide.

dying as in any sense accepted by Him instead of ours. Rather, "He saw humanity submitted to the law of self-sacrifice; and in the light of that idea He beholds it as perfect, and is satisfied" . . . "It is true that He died for us, in that we present His sacrifice as ours" . . . "The value of the death of Christ consisted in the surrender of self-will. In the fortieth Psalm, the value of every other kind of sacrifice being first denied, the words follow, 'Then said I, Lo, I come, to do Thy will, . . . The profound idea contained therefore in the death of Christ is the duty of self-surrender.'" "But in us that surrender scarcely deserves the name; even to use the word self-sacrifice covers us with a kind of shame. Then it is that there is an almost boundless joy in acquiescing in the life and death of Christ, recognizing it as ours, and representing it to ourselves and God as what we aim at." [A noble idea truly, and well worthy of being carried out; but how does it either answer, or set aside our answer to the question—as to how Christ died for the guilty?]

Another (besides extracts that will be given below) thus writes—"Whatever else Christ's work was on our behalf, it was and is sacrifice. It was and is the sacrifice which alone is intrinsically acceptable to the supreme reason and everlasting justice of the Father—the sacrifice which binds together and quickens all imperfect services, and efforts after obedience, that have had any truth or meaning—the sacrifice in which the all-Holy, and the sinful, who were alienated and at a distance, meet together and are at one. It is the mighty cloud of incense which, rising from out of moral and spiritual history, makes that history fragrant and acceptable . . . It is accepted by the Father because it is the perfect

doing of the Father's will, the perfect manifestation of the Father's mind."*

A single sentence more from a popular writer will give us the view which has obtained so wide a currency—"He suffered unto the death, not that men might not suffer, but that their suffering might be like His, and lead them up to His perfection."†

I conclude these extracts by returning to a writer whose work on the subject has attracted an unusual degree of attention, and of whose style of thought we have had a specimen already—one who has shown a remarkable combination of two qualities not always united, boldness and devoutness—and has given utterance to a large amount of Christian sentiment truly wholesome and refreshing.‡

Dr. Campbell tells us that, in following out some speculations of President Edwards on the sufferings of Christ, he was led to what he considers as the true view of the Atonement. "I am shut up to the conclusion that, while Christ suffered for our sins as an atoning sacrifice, what He suffered was not, because from its nature it could not be, a punishment." This distinction he sees to be involved in the truth as presented by Edwards, that "the Sufferer suffers what He suffers, just through seeing sin and sinners with God's eye, and feeling in reference to them with God's heart." Such suffering, he argues, cannot be a punishment, because it is "nothing else than a divine experience in humanity."

* Rev. F. Garden, "Tracts for Priests," &c., iii. p. 23.

† "Unspoken Sermons," by George Macdonald, p. 41.

‡ J. M. Campbell, D.D., on "The Nature of the Atonement," pp. 135-137.

Again, "to send Him in the likeness of sinful flesh was to make Him a sacrifice for sin; for it was to lay the burden of our sins upon Him. Thus related to us, while by love identified with us, the Son of God necessarily came under all our burdens, and especially our great burden, sin. The wrath of God against sin is a reality, however men may have erred as to how it is to be appeased. Nor is the idea that satisfaction was due to divine justice a delusion, however we have wandered from the true conception of what would meet its righteous demand. And if so, then Christ, in dealing with God on behalf of men, must be conceived as dealing with the righteous wrath of God against sin, and as according to it that which was its due."

We are then told of the twofold dealing of Christ—namely, with man on the part of God, and conversely. In the one He exhibits "a perfect zeal for the Father's honour—a perfect sympathy in the condemnation of sin by Him who is love"—all this being presented in the life, and perfected in the death of Christ—"the cost of such a testimony for God fully answering to the idea of His being a 'sacrifice for sin.'"

Then, on the other hand, "that mind which, in reference to man, took the form of condemnation of sin, would, in reference to the Father, take the form of a perfect *confession* of our sins. This confession, as to its own nature, must have been a perfect *amen* in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man. He who was the TRUTH could not be in humanity, and not utter it."

This sentiment is thus worked out—"Now, what is this *amen* in relation to God's wrath against sin? what place has it in Christ's dealing with that wrath? I

answer, He who so responds to the divine wrath, saying, 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, who judgest thus,' is necessarily receiving the full appropriation and realization of that wrath, as well as of that sin against which it comes forth, into His soul and spirit—into the bosom of the divine humanity—and, so receiving it, He responds to it with a perfect response—a response from the depths of that divine humanity—and in that perfect response He absorbs it. For that response has all the elements of a *perfect repentance* in humanity for all the sins of man—a perfect sorrow—a perfect contrition—all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection—all excepting the personal consequences of sin—and by that perfect response, in *amen* to the mind of God in relation to sin, is the wrath of God rightly met; and that is accorded to the divine justice which is its due, and which could alone satisfy it."

Once more, Christ's death is distinctly represented as of the same nature as His life—"He ever (*i.e.*, all His life) through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God."

Such is the view. It will be considered in a subsequent chapter. I only ask one question here. If Christ's "dealing with man on the part of God" "fully answers to the idea of His being 'a sacrifice for sin'"—what room is there left for that 'meeting of divine wrath,' and 'satisfying of divine justice,' which is represented as the second branch of the atoning work, and in which we should naturally suppose that a 'sacrifice for sin' mainly consisted?

NOTE ON DR. HALLEY'S VIEW OF THE ATONEMENT.*

“The death of Christ (he writes) was sacrificial, *i.e.*, was endured on account of the sins of others, and designed to avert the punishment from the offenders. This is the doctrine of substitution.” Then comes the question, “How should the death of Jesus avert the punishment of sin?” In answer to this he argues that “mere suffering and death cannot be pleasing to the merciful and gracious God, and could not therefore be that which conciliated the love of the Father.” “The only thing which can be pleasing to God, and conciliate His love, is moral excellence. . . . If the sufferings of Christ in themselves were not the object of divine complacency, yet the meek and gentle spirit of the Sufferer must have been well-pleasing in the sight of the Holy Father. With what complacency must God have looked upon that self-devoted, self-sacrificing spirit which induced the Saviour to submit to ‘so great a death’—to ‘become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!’ With what approbation must the Father have seen the calm and unbroken resolution of His Son to glorify Him by drinking the bitter cup which He had mingled! . . . The sufferings indirectly, as giving occasion to these acts, feelings, and thoughts, of the holy Sufferer, procured our redemption; but the holy deeds on which God looked with pleasure were the *direct* and meritorious cause of our salvation, and the true propitiation for our sins. . . . The deeds on which God looked with complacency were meritorious and deserved a great reward, and the reward granted was the remission of sin to all who believe in Christ. The deserving and obtaining of this reward by our Lord is the atonement. . . . That so much virtue, so severely tried, and so gloriously displayed, should go unrewarded, would be of all mysteries among the most inexplicable under the government of a just and holy

* See “Congregational Lecture on the Sacraments,” vol. ii. pp. 311, *sqq.*

God. . . . That Christ should have sought the salvation of His people was in accordance with the spirit of His death; and that His Father should have adjudged to Him that salvation was equally in accordance with His purpose of mercy revealed in due time. We may be confident that He has done sufficient to deserve the greatest possible reward, even the salvation of all believers, be they as many as our most enlarged benevolence can desire. The great principles involved in our view of the doctrine are that goodness deserves to be rewarded, and that the perfect goodness of Christ, attested by His death, is rewarded by the salvation of many sinners, whose salvation He sought when He laid down His life in obedience to His Father's will."

Such is the view; and, as a theory, it is intelligible. But how it can be called "the doctrine of substitution" it is hard to see; and how it can meet the Scripture view no less so. It has been always thought that 'substitution' meant—the giving one thing instead of another. Now, the death of Christ, we are told, could be substitutionary without, *as such*, doing anything for the removing of our death! His death, in short, as urged by the writer, is not *the means* of redemption to us, but only the *occasion* of that virtue in Him which God rewards with salvation to all believers. The God-man exhibits the utmost excellence, and God rewards this by granting salvation to all who believe—believe in what?—in His 'dying for our sins'?—His being made sin for us? No, for we find nothing of that here; but *in the humiliation and generosity of the Saviour!* All this, I say, is intelligible enough—but if in order to be the gospel, and in order to be true, it must be the doctrine of substitution also—then surely it is not the gospel, and it is not true. It has been thought that, if the Duke of Wellington had chosen, he might have had his own great merit rewarded by the French king with the life of Ney; but it was never thought that this would have been 'substitution.'

CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST'S TESTIMONY TO HIS ATONING DEATH.

"THOU shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." (Matt. i. 21.) And how should He save? Another voice will tell; it is that of one specially inspired, as we are assured, for this very utterance—one who believed that, in thus speaking, he was in harmony with all the prophets from the beginning; and that God, in now sending the Saviour, was only "performing the mercy promised to the fathers, and remembering His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham." Salvation, then—if we will listen to one thus standing on the verge of the two dispensations—salvation implies, as its very foremost article, "the remission of sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Remission of sins, light, life, and peace—see how these things are linked together in the song of Zacharias. Such was the preparation, as he and all devout Hebrews then understood it, for the "serving of God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life." (Luke i. 72-79.)

Is it questioned, then, what we are to understand by *remission of sins*? But what can we, with any reason,

understand other than the world has always understood by it—namely, the remitting, or putting away, of that penalty which the transgressor was supposed to have incurred? Such was surely the meaning of the expression in the Old Testament, from one end to the other. For example, “Pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of Thy mercy, and as Thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word.” (Numb. xiv. 19, 20.) “He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not.” (Ps. lxxvii. 38.) “If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.” (Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.) Such also is the only meaning ever attached to the expression ‘forgiving,’ or ‘not forgiving men their trespasses’—namely, visiting, or not visiting them with the consequences of their wrong-doing. What else then can be the meaning of “our Heavenly Father forgiving,” or “not forgiving us”? (Matt. vi. 14.) This is the only sense in which the servant was “forgiven all his debt,” and then “refused to forgive his fellow-servant,” and finally had his own forgiveness cancelled. (Matt. xviii. 27, &c.) And this, of course, is the only way in which any one can “forgive his repenting brother, seven times in a day,” or “seventy times seven.” (Luke xvii. 4; Matt. xviii. 21.) Nor, in any other way could the word apply, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.” (John xx. 23.) And what else could any one have understood who heard the Saviour’s utterance in regard to the woman, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven”? What but this view of the matter enraged the Pharisees when they heard the announcement to

the paralytic, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee"? Or, what but this called for faith on the one hand, or fear on the other, when the Saviour declared, "All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith-soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is liable to eternal damnation;" "it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (Mark iii. 28, 29; Matt. xii. 32.)* Most assuredly, it was such a 'remission' that they professed to seek who hasted towards Jordan at John's call. (Mark i. 4.) It was such a blessing that was to be held forth when "repentance and remission of sins were to be preached to all nations in Christ's name."

* Here is a specimen of how this matter has been regarded—"There are two sins," says a very popular writer, "not of individual deed, but spiritual condition, which cannot be forgiven, *i.e.*, as it seems to me, which cannot be excused, passed by, made little of, even by the tenderness of God, inasmuch as they will permit no forgiveness to come into the soul; they will permit no good influence to go on working alongside of them; they shut out God altogether One is unforgiveness to our neighbour The other is not merely doing wrong knowingly, but setting their whole natures knowingly against the light." And then it is argued that, upon repentance, even such sins will be forgiven. "Otherwise God would be less merciful than man." Is this, I ask, to accept, or to refuse, the Saviour's solemn declaration—that there is a sin, called by Him the "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," which is beyond all reach of pardon in this world, or the world to come? Consider also what follows—"I think when Judas fled from his hanged and fallen body, he fled to the tender help of Jesus, and found it—I say not how If any one remind me of the words, 'It had been good for that man if he had not been born'—I would say, as a conjectural explanation, Judas had got none of the good of the world into which he had been born—he had not inherited the earth. He had lived an evil life, out of harmony with the world and its God." ("Unspoken Sermons," G. Macdonald, p. 95.)

(Luke xxiv. 47.) And it was precisely this that the publican begged when he cried, "God be merciful (propitiated) to me a sinner," and which he felt that he had obtained when "he went down to his house justified rather than the other." (Luke xviii. 13, 14).

Assuming, then, that the remission of sins, as a matter between God and a soul, means what it means in all other cases—namely, the discharging of the sinner from the punishment due to him—we have only to remember, in order to complete our view of the case, what the penalty, as affixed by God's law to transgression, really is. It is *death*. If not, our present work is in vain, and had better end here. But, assuming that such is the penalty, we proceed to enquire in what way the death on Calvary is fitted to deliver us from that death to which, on account of sin, we were adjudged.

We consult, first, our Lord Himself, who, notwithstanding the silence which He usually maintained in regard to anything beyond the mere fact of His death,* did yet, more than once, speak out the object of it as distinctly as ever His apostles did.† Here is one of these utterances—"This is my blood of the new cove-

* In regard to this it has been well said, "He intimates that He must go and meet death; . . . must be betrayed—and that all this was done to achieve a foreseen work. . . . Thus these statements invest the death of Jesus with a peculiar significance; they set the mind enquiring what the meaning can be of the hard necessity laid upon Him." (Dr. Thomson, in "Aids to Faith," p. 327.)

† "I should wonder," says Mr. Davies, "at the boldness of the man who would say that the gospels, at any rate, contain the doctrine that God's forgiveness could not act freely until the punishment of His Son had satisfied His justice." (Two Sermons, p. 14.) As to the word 'punishment' I say nothing now. I only mean to say, and shall endeavour to show, that our Lord distinctly teaches that His death was to be in the way of substitution for us.

nant, shed for many, for (in order to) *the remission of sins.*" (Matt. xxvi. 28.) What the blood of the old covenant meant, and how it stood connected with remission of the legal penalty, we have already seen. That, however, was a thing of shadow and ceremony only. But now we have the blood of the new covenant as connected with law, sin, and death, in their very innermost and uttermost sense. The one was like a scenic representation coming as near to reality as the case allowed, and solemnly gone through for a temporary, but most important, purpose. The other is the substantive reality of all that formerly was shadowy and temporary. We may be sure, then, that nothing will be wanting which can serve for the substantiating of the shadow, and that nothing will be introduced which might serve to convert the substance into anything at all shadowy or indefinite. The blood will be, in short, what it professes to be—the *direct means* appointed by God for the *remission of sins*; not just a means, or even a power, for bringing men to repentance, so that the punishment which was pursuing the sinner may draw back from the penitent. For what does our Lord teach but this, that, in the shedding of His blood, He gives up His life—gives it for those who by sin had forfeited theirs—so that, He sinking down to death in their room, they might rise up to life? And, still more specifically, this giving up of His life is in order to the remission of their sins. But now, remission of sin means the removal of the condemnation of the sinner (as we have already seen); and so it is taught in this precious sentence—that the Redeemer gave Himself to death on behalf of those who were condemned to die, in order that they might be delivered from the condemnation.

This, then, might be taken as decisive on the question of our Lord's teaching. But if there be any obscurity about it, another of His words, spoken a few days earlier, should effectually remove it—"The Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many," *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*. (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.)* For, what thoughts would such words awaken in the mind of a Jew? He would think, of course, of all the cases in which human life had been ransomed among his people, whether by the offering of life or of money. He would think how, in each case, it had always been a single person offering a special ransom, and obtaining a special deliverance for himself;—but here it is One who speaks of providing, by a single offering, a ransom for many,† In all those other cases it had been, at the best, a mere animal life that had formed the ransom;—but here it is the Wisest

* Alford, after saying on Matt. xx. 28, that "this is a plain declaration of the sacrificial and vicarious nature of our Lord's death," has done serious injustice to the subject by an unfortunate mistake in regard to an illustration which he gives of *λύτρον* from the Old Testament. It is the case of one who being legally adjudged to death, on account of a fatal injury done by his ox, has his life ransomed by a money payment. (Exod. xxi. 30.) Alford calls this "a payment as equivalent for a life destroyed"—thinking apparently of a money compensation as made for the life destroyed by the ox—entirely overlooking what had just been said, "The owner also shall be put to death." This, in fact, together with the destruction of the ox, would have been the true *equivalent for the life destroyed* by the accident; whereas the ransom-price was the equivalent to be fixed for the life of the owner at whose door the calamity lay. I may add that there is no reason to turn 'ransom' into 'propitiation,' as he does, in Prov. xiii. 8. For, however figuratively the proverb may employ the language, the idea is simply that the rich can save his life by money, when the poor cannot.

† *Filium dare λύτρον pro aliis in magnis calamitatibus, mos vetus. Steph. Thes.*

and Best who had ever lived that speaks of giving His own life. Nor could the Jew forget that the one object, as well as the very meaning, of ransom, in such cases, had been to provide against *the cutting off of life*. He knew that to ransom a life did not mean to take sin out of a heart—however that might be the fit return for the mercy, on the part of the ransomed—just as to feed the body does not mean to make a person devout, however fit it be that divine bounty should so operate. And so, in hearing the words before us, what could he think, if he thought at all, but that this Jesus must, rightly or wrongly, soberly or madly, really intend to give HIS life as a ransom for other lives, in the one understood sense of the words—namely, as a substitutionary offering for the saving of those lives from death. This was the meaning of all ransom. To speak of it as an inward renovation, for the enabling or inclining of a man to discharge his moral obligations, is just to pervert its whole meaning. For it included, as its entire groundwork, the idea—not of a *moral* obligation to be *discharged by* the ransomed party, but—of a *legal* obligation *from which he was to be discharged*—the means of discharge being some legal compensation or satisfaction—but, whether presented by him or *for* him, mattered nothing, so far as the ransom went. And if such was the meaning of ransom in all cases, it was very especially so in regard to the ‘atoning’ or ‘covering’ blood with which the Jew was so familiar.

Nor does it, in the least degree, impair the value of such considerations to notice that our Lord, in thus speaking, has it peculiarly in view to give a lesson on humility.*

* Thus Mr. Maurice writes on the passage—“We speak of the

That only furnishes the occasion of the saying, but can never alter its meaning. We might, indeed, feel a certain perplexity if it seemed that such a meaning of the words was out of keeping with the manifest object of the speaker. But, surely, it does not make His humiliation and self-sacrifice the less in itself, or the less valuable as an example to us, that He gave up His life with the infinitely loving purpose of providing—and that in the natural, genuine, understood, sense of the word—a *ransom for us*. If this be not the true sense, then by all means give us good reasons for adopting the one that is. But it is hard to be told that we must not accept the only sense that we know anything about, because the Saviour had it peculiarly on His mind to teach humility on that occasion! And it is hard to have a sense ascribed to the words which we

unspeakably costly ransom which Christ offered for the redemption of man, and we speak truly. *He* teaches us wherein the costliness of it consisted. He humbled Himself; He became a servant; He was the servant of all. Here was the sacrifice with which God was well pleased; here was the costly oblation; here was the mighty ransom by which the One was able to deliver the many. The lowliest of all was the One who most showed forth the glory of God's love; the lowliest of all was the One who could alone exercise God's power on behalf of His creatures. That power was a redeeming power; that power came forth when the Son gave up His spirit to His Father; that power becoming effectual for us when it redeems us from our pride, when it breaks that chain which has kept us in slavery to the spirit of disobedience, which has hindered us from serving the living God. We know the meaning of the ransom, we understand the greatness of the sacrifice, when we give up the craving to be the chief of all, and ask for the Spirit of Christ to make us the servants of all." ("Doctrine of Sacrifice," p. 130.) So, "The doctrine of the passage is . . . that the incarnation and death of the Son of man were the costly means which God actually employed to assert His right over us—the price He paid to win our surrender." (J. Ll. Davies, "Work of Christ," p. xxviii.)

can by no effort of mind see to be in them—and that because of a theoretical difficulty in the plain sense, which we cannot see to be a difficulty at all!

Comparing now these two great utterances of our Lord, in regard to His approaching death—how clearly they come before us as equivalent—the ‘giving of the life’ in the one, to the ‘shedding of the blood’ in the other; while the ‘saving’ of the forfeited life by means of a ‘ransom’ is identical with the ‘remission of sins,’ or, in other words, with the deliverance from that death which was sin’s wages. Such is the decisive, unambiguous, testimony of our Lord on these two occasions to the character of His atoning work. And there is not a word in them taken from the great volume of His *life*; all that He speaks of is in regard to His still more wondrous *death*;—no word of a living sacrifice, but only of a dying one. His “life given as a ransom”—His “blood shed for many in order to remission of sins”—such, in its simple grandeur and unshared virtue, is that work of atonement. Is it safe, then, to add to that which Jesus thus left alone? Is it safe to take away from its single, all-efficient, atoning virtue in order to confer upon something else a portion of its efficacy? Would not this be the sure way of misconceiving both the death and the life of Jesus? We see also how the atoning power is referred not even to the circumstances of the death-agony—important and essential for their own purpose as these doubtless were—but simply to the death itself—the giving of the life-ransom, the shedding of the blood for remission. When will theologians on both sides come to see in this *death* of Jesus just that worth which He thus assigns to it? When will they see the fitness of it as the single

means of our coming to sing—"Bless the Lord, O my soul, who *redeemeth thy life from destruction*"?

Such, after the announcement made of Him as the sin-bearing Lamb before He commenced His work, is His own declaration of His great design, now that the work is finished. Such, after all that He has said of free forgiveness, whether His Father's or His own, is still the deepest thought of His heart—that His blood must be shed *in order* to forgiveness. Whoever really "trembles at God's words" will find it hard to give to words like these anything short of their most direct and strictly proper meaning.

Turning now from the first Gospel to the fourth, we find, under a variety of forms, more frequent allusion to the great subject of remission of sins, and substitutionary death. Thus we see the eternal, all-creating Word becoming flesh, and dwelling among us—rejected by most, but received by some, who, being thus born into the family of the living God, escape the death that is otherwise inevitable. (John i. 12.) This, of course, might represent only a spiritual operation in the hearts of the regenerate. But then He from whom flows this grace is immediately presented as "the Lamb of God"—"the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world." What a testimony to the great truth of the substitutionary sin-bearing! And what an extraordinary repugnance to it that could ever have led any one to affirm that the 'taking' or 'bearing away' of sin has no reference to a direct removal of its punishment, but solely to an internal renovation! As if such language in the Old Testament ever meant anything but just that which is now so confidently denied; or any one in

the ancient world had ever a thought of a lamb as, either actually or symbolically, making people good by example, or influence, or some infused virtue, and thus "bearing away their sins"!—and not only thought so himself, but expected others to understand the same by the use of language which would certainly call up the old and familiar view of the victim as receiving, and bearing away by its bloodshedding, the sins laid upon it at the altar!

In the next chapter we find our Lord alluding, in His usual style, to His death and resurrection, in token of His authority, but without any hint as to the character or design of the event. In the third chapter it is very different. Here we have Jesus Himself instructing Nicodemus in the great salvation; and the Baptist illustrating, with his own important intimations, his Master's discourse. Let us gather into one view the various expressions that concern us now. Among these we find a contrast of the most vital character throughout. There is, on the one hand, 'perishing,' against which is set 'having eternal life.' There is 'condemnation' and 'no condemnation.' There is 'having everlasting life'—the contrary of which is, "shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." In a word, we have, on the one side, the death which sin brings; and, on the other, the life which follows the removal of this death—the foremost constituent of which, assuredly, is the remission of sins. Such is salvation in its primary stage. And how does it become ours? The Saviour has told us—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14, 15.) Here, then, is the death

on the cross, as God's great means for our not "perishing" but "having life eternal." With this view the Son of man must be lifted up. This is plain, but it is not all. The lifting up of the Saviour is to act like the lifting up of the serpent. And this is spoken to one who, merely as a Jew, can well appreciate the moral meaning of an illustrative transaction at once so great and striking. Besides which, that Jew is a man of rare intelligence and candour, as well as of the foremost rank amongst the masters in Israel. What, then, did a smitten Jew in the wilderness, or a thinking Jew in Jerusalem, perceive in the uplifted serpent? Was it not the same to any unprejudiced eye as the taking away of the serpent from the stung man, and lifting it up before him on the pole, as an enemy no longer triumphing over him, but now itself overcome and triumphed over on his behalf? Thus was death turned into life for the smitten Israelite. And thus does Jesus represent Himself as lifted up—that we, applying that, as the people did the great act in the wilderness, "may not perish, but have eternal life;"—whereas, neglecting this, we "shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on us." For if the Israelite, in looking to the pole, saw there his deadly enemy transfixed and put away—so we, in looking to the uplifted Saviour, do it with this divine voice in our ears—"The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" "who His own self lifted up our sins in His own body *to the tree*." (Isa. liii. 7; 1 Peter ii. 24.) And if it made all possible difference to the sufferer in the wilderness to see his serpent on the pole instead of on himself, it makes the same difference for us—after adjusting the proportion between soul and body, time and eternity—to see our

sins on the head of God's Lamb, instead of on our own.

And thus, using the discourse with Nicodemus as a key to all the others on the same theme, we may very fairly say, whenever we meet with *eternal life*, that it is just the bright and blessed contrast of 'perishing'—of 'condemnation'—of the 'wrath of God abiding';—the contrast of that death which is 'the wages of sin,' and the closest companion of that prime blessing, 'the remission of sin.' Thus, under the shadow of the uplifted serpent, may we profitably listen while the Saviour declares—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath *everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) How then, after this, can we regard the life which comes through Christ, except as, in the first place, the direct opposite of a direct condemnation to death which has come upon us through sin?

And what, again, is it but the same view that the Saviour gives (I speak of this, of course, not as the *whole view*, but as a very essential part of it) when He speaks of Himself as the "Bread of God which giveth life unto the world"? True, nothing can less suggest substitution than mere bread taken and eaten. But then the remarkable thing is that our Lord cannot apply to Himself the figure of the manna, without introducing the element of the sacrifice—"My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Now, it is easy enough, if there be the disposition for it, to take this as a mere sentiment, very

rhetorically worded, and meaning only that there must be a thorough assimilation between the master and the disciple (like what takes place between the eater and the bread) before there can be any spiritual life in a man. All this is easily said, but it is rather hard measure for any one who happens to be peculiarly anxious—not as yet about the nourishing, but simply about the originating of a spiritual life within him. Nor surely, is it either right, or safe, in a matter of such high concern, to betake ourselves to a merely natural idea in regard to bread—even then misconstruing the illustration, as if our Lord, when simply meaning that we must eat His *words*, or feed on His *example*, should express this under the extravagant figure of eating His *flesh*, and drinking His *blood*; although, all the time, blood was to the Jew so purely sacrificial a matter; and although the Speaker had it yet in reserve to declare—“This is my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Again, we have the Shepherd as “coming to give life to the sheep,” and as actually “giving them eternal life, so that they shall never perish.” And how He effects this He distinctly informs us—“I lay down my life *for* the sheep.” But this, again, is represented as only the highest degree of merit in any true shepherd—to hazard, and even sacrifice, when necessary, his own life for the security of the sheep. Humanly regarded, the case is, of course, very exceptional. Enough if, however rare, it indicates a real substitution, a real life-for-life surrender. (John x. 10, 11, 15, 28.) Then such, says Jesus, is actually *His* redemption, “He has come to give *His* life for the sheep”—to “give it as a *ransom* for many.”

Then, as His end approaches, He teaches that “the

corn of wheat must die, ere it can bring forth fruit ;" that He must be "lifted up from the earth, in order to draw all men unto Him ;" and that He must stoop lower than to a floor, with bason and towel in hand, before He can provide that laver, without a washing in which neither Peter nor we can have any part with Him. (John xii. 24, 32 ; xiii. 8.)

And what, short of substitution, does the Lord teach when He says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"? (John xv. 13.) For it cannot be questioned whether the man who lays down his life for his friends does so merely with the generous view of doing them some great service, or with the distinct design of saving their life by exposing and sacrificing his own *instead*. How then—if the illustration is to be worth anything, if the Saviour's love is to appear as exceeding the 'friend's'—how can it be supposed that here, as already in the case of the 'Shepherd,' Jesus means to speak of 'giving His life for us' in any other sense than 'instead of' ours? We are not forgetting that the word used to denote 'for' (*ὑπέρ*) properly means 'on behalf of ;' but that does not hinder it from signifying 'instead of,' when such is manifestly, as in these cases, *the* special relation pointed at.*

Thus, then, our Lord represents His death. A "life given as a ransom instead of" others was an expression which had no ambiguity in Hebrew ears—whether it

* Thus besides the use of *ὑπέρ* in John x. 11, 15, xv. 13, we find to the same purpose 1 John iii. 16—"He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives *for the brethren* ;" Rom. xvi. 3—"Who have *for* my life laid down their own necks" (which cannot mean *for the good of*). So it is a very distinct substitution which is expressed in John xi. 50-52—"That one die *for* the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (*cf.* xviii. 14.) The same is the natural

sent back the mind to the numerous cases of ransom by blood, or by money. "Blood shed for the remission of sins" was an expression as familiar, and in what sense we leave it for each one to pronounce. To say that a man gives his life for his friends is, of course, a very different mode of speech, and requires, for the understanding of it, an acquaintance with the circumstances. If these imply that the life thus saved must otherwise have been taken—then surely the life sacrificed has been given *instead of* it. And is not such precisely the fact as regards the Saviour's giving of His life for us—whether as viewed in its own light, or with the help of the illustrations which He employed to represent it? What purpose does it serve, then, to remind us of all the thousand cases in which man has sacrificed his life for man, without any thought of substitution? The question is not about a laying out and risking of one's entire life for another—but about the positive and designed giving up of a life on his account. Nor is it just the giving up of a life for the sake of a great moral impression—but with the view that, the one life being taken, the other may be spared. There is all the difference between the two things, in fact, which appears between Moses, as sacrificing himself for the people when Jethro counselled him to take help—and Moses, as entreating that he might die in their stead, when death was already hanging over *them*.

sense in connection with 'ambassadors,' as 2 Cor. v. 20 (twice); Eph. vi. 20. As to Phil. 13, ὑπὲρ σοῦ, the sense can only be, 'in thy stead.' In regard to the last expression we find in Steph. Thes.—"Pro te, i.e. fungens vice tua." He quotes from Dem. Aeschin. Plat. Xen., remarking upon the manner in which they employ this preposition, and adding—"Recentiores vero scriptores etiam simpliciter pro ἀντι posuerunt."

(Exod. xviii. 18; xxxii. 32.) There has seldom been a nobler spectacle than when the Moravian missionaries gave themselves up to be immured in the African lazaretto—thus identifying themselves with the wretched inmates, and sacrificing everything for them, as the only opportunity of winning them to Christ. It was the very mind of Christ that was thus displayed. It was the work of Christ as He would have it done by His followers. But it was not the work which He Himself did when “He gave His life a ransom instead of” ours.

After all this we can better appreciate the feeling with which Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven, and thanked His Father for “the power to give eternal life to as many as had been given Him;” and we can appreciate also the meaning with which the Evangelist says, “These things are written that, believing, ye *might have life* through His name.” (John xvii. 2, xx. 31.)

Nor can it be out of place, in considering the substitutionary character of our Lord’s death, to adduce, from the gospel history, the testimony of one who was neither an apostle nor a friend, but a bigoted priest and a bitter enemy. The question may be asked, But how could *he* know? and what right has *he* to be heard in such a matter? He knew, because it pleased that Spirit who had once used the mouth of a Balaam now to use the mouth of a Caiaphas. Hence the right of the high priest of that day to be heard even by us. Under such direction, then, the judgment was passed in the high council of the nation, “It is expedient for us that one man *die for* the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” And thus “he prophesied that Jesus should *die for* that nation, and not *for* that nation

only." Add to this the remark appended by the Evangelist, and which has this special importance that it employs the peculiar expression 'perish,' in connection with the Saviour's death—"Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die (perish) for the people." (John xi. 49-52, xviii. 14.) And then let it be observed that, whatever may be the value of the opinion ascribed to Caiaphas, we have in connection with it the very expression 'die for,' as constantly used by the apostles, and in the plain sense contended for, to 'die instead of.'

Thus, then, we maintain that our Lord did teach His own atonement—and that, in the light of a real life-for-life substitution, in order to the remission of sin—a real compensation, or satisfaction on our behalf, as signified by "ransom."

AN ANCIENT VIEW OF RANSOM.

Will the reader turn for a moment to the well-known passage in the Epistle to Diognetus, § 9, to see how the 'ransom' was regarded in those early days. "When the measure of our iniquity was now filled up, and it had been fully manifested that its reward, namely, punishment and death, was to be looked for . . . then God (out of His pure love) gave up His Son as a *ransom* (λύτρον) for us—the Holy for transgressors—the innocent for the wicked—the righteous for the unrighteous—the incorruptible for the corruptible—the immortal for the mortal. For what, except His righteousness had power to cover our sins? Through whom was it possible for us, the lawless and ungodly, to be justified except through the Son of God alone? O the sweet *exchange* (compensation ἀνταλλαγῆς)! O the unsearchable contrivance! O the unlooked for benefits!—that the iniquity of the many should be hidden up in the One righteous, and the

righteousness of One should justify many transgressors"! (See Ps. xxxii. 1; Isa. liii. 11; Matt. xx. 28; Rom. iv. 7; v. 19; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 24; iii. 18.)

Observe here. (1) All this is the *cure for a certain evil*. That evil is, "Punishment and death" as the "expected reward of our iniquity." (2) In order to the remedy for such an evil, the Son of God is given up as a *ransom* for us. Just consent to take, then, in its natural sense, and in connection with this the demand for it as just specified, and the author's meaning cannot be doubtful. (3) The language following is such as, even by itself, would indicate substitution—much more as the expanding of the thought of *ransom*. (4) The expression '*justify*' has only to be taken at its own value, and according to the connection, so as to lead to the same conclusion. (5) In addition to which, and as removing all reasonable doubt as to the writer's meaning, we have the great blessing described as a matter of *exchange*. The writer seems to have in view the words in which Jesus intimates that there is nothing which a man may give in *exchange* (ἀντάλλαγμα) *for his soul*—at the same time signifying that in Him we find "the sweet exchange" for our sentenced life. After this, we can read, with great quietness, an opinion like the following—"It would be to ignore the whole tenor of patristic theology, if we supposed the imputation-theory was intended here It is clearly a *change in ourselves* from sin to holiness, through the imparted grace of Christ." [!] (Oxenham, Cath. Doctr. of Atonement, p. 104.) But why, instead of giving us the noble expression, 'O the sweet *exchange*,' did the writer of these words take the liberty of putting it before the English reader as, 'O sweet *change*'? Was that the act of an impartial judge?

CHAPTER XII.

THE SAVIOUR'S DYING EXPERIENCE.

So far we have considered our Lord's own statements, direct or indirect, in regard to the object of His death. And if our view of these be correct, we may expect to find as harmonizing with it the strong expressions of feeling to which He gave utterance as His end approached. There is something, in short, about the doctrine so absolutely unique, so entirely beyond all experience or calculation, that everything which drops from the great Sufferer in regard to His closing experience, must be expected to partake of the same remarkable and original character. Let us review the chief of these expressions, and see whether they are in harmony with what has been, and shall be urged; or whether there be any trace of such discordance as should lead us to suspect the accuracy of our conclusion. Several of these sayings, of course, might correspond with more than one hypothesis; but, taking the whole in connection, let us see to what conclusion they point.

"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened (constrained, impelled,) till it be accomplished?" (Luke xii. 49.) Here He signifies that He was about to be plunged into a flood of trouble, towards which He was hurried along by some overpowering impulse. Is it too much to find in this the indication

of a purpose to go through a very peculiar suffering, instead of the anticipation of a suffering which was nothing more than the accompaniment of some other object as the thing directly aimed at? And how striking our Lord's expressions on the first day of His last week, in reply to the simple request of the Greeks, "We would see Jesus!" "The hour is at hand," says He, "that the Son of man should be glorified." Thus He commences to instruct at once the disciples and the strangers; and thus He shows how full His mind was of the coming glory. But, there is a death to intervene, ere that glory can be reached;—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Be it so, it is an inspiriting thought of the very highest order. So much glory to God, so much blessing to man—nothing can better harmonize with the prospect of His own approaching glorification. But how shall we reconcile with this the expressions which follow—"Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour." For why should His soul be thus troubled—troubled to the extent of a conscious inability to say what would thoroughly explain his perplexity? There now follows a strange petition—"Father, save me from this hour;" and yet the petition is hardly offered, when it is withdrawn, and almost apologised for—"But for this cause came I unto this hour." There must be some reason for this extraordinary conflict and perplexity in the breast of Jesus. Yes, and all the more when we find Him, immediately after, return to those animating thoughts which should naturally have precluded and swallowed up everything

like confusion or perplexity. For, in the midst of all, He is still consciously the conqueror of Satan, and the Sovereign of souls—"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." (John xii. 21-32.) Such would be exactly that combination of sentiment which our view of the atoning sacrifice, and the triumphant issue of it, should occasion. But how shall we account for the co-existence with such a prospect of a conflict so awful—on the supposition that the Saviour's death was simply a loving sacrifice of His own will to His Father's, with the view of inspiring with a similar ambition those whom sin had alienated and corrupted?

Let us just mark, now, the spirit in which He speaks at the last supper. "He took the cup, and gave thanks." See here the entire absence of confusion, and of every trace of sadness; for His agony has not yet commenced. And why—making all allowance for the shrinking of nature from the external cross, of which however we find no symptom—why should not the whole drama have been carried through with like feelings of calmness and cheerfulness? "He took the cup, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28.) In the thought of such a benefit there was, surely, nothing to distract; nor is it easy to see whence His agony could arise, so long as we consider that benefit to have been secured by the simple surrender or sacrifice of His will. Nor yet in what follows is there anything peculiarly fitted to depress—"But I say unto you, I will not drink

henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." In accordance with all which they sang the accustomed hymn, and then quietly retired to the mount of Olives. At last He utters a word significant of what was to follow:—"It is written, I will smite the Shepherd." He had in His mind, we must suppose, the preceding portion of the extraordinary passage, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my Fellow!" Such was to be the smiting. And what may be its meaning? For it is certainly no part of *His* self-consecration, of *His* doing His Father's will,—"*I* will smite." It is a direct act of God, to which the Saviour simply yields Himself. And such an act can mean only one of these two things—chastisement or judgment. Was Jesus, then, being subjected to anything in the way of chastisement at His Father's hand? If not (and it is for another, not me, to conceive the possibility of it), then the smiting could only be in the exercise of judgment—a judgment wanting nothing of what was expressed by the call, "*Awake, O sword!*"

The next scene is in the garden, and thus it opens: "He *began* to be sorrowful, and very heavy." It is thus a *new* experience which has come upon Him. But how could such an experience arise from any sacrifice of His own will to His Father's? What but this had His whole life consisted of? And yet it had produced only joy, never sorrow or heaviness. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." Such had been the uninterrupted devotion of Jesus, attended by a peace and a joy equally constant,

together with an unbroken witness from above, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And now, if, according to the theory in question, the present moment be distinguished only by the intensity and thoroughness of the sacrifice, what should the new experience have been but simply an enhancement of the old? Or, is the peculiarity of His sorrow supposed to arise from the peculiar intensity of His sympathy with divine holiness in its view of human sin? But when had that sympathy been less than perfect? And yet it had never tended to any such result as this; it had never interfered with that calmness which had been without parallel in a human bosom until now, when it is supplanted by a distress still more unparalleled. Or is it a new measure of compassion that has seized Him for sinful, suffering humanity? Yet neither, surely, had this ever been so inadequate as to be susceptible of the vast increment supposed. For let us, on no account, overlook the very special emphasis of the statement, "He *began* to be sorrowful and very heavy." It is clearly a new operation which is thus pointed at, as leading to so new an issue. What *is* that operation? This is our question. And it involves the whole character of the Saviour's atoning work; for it involves the question *what* He really suffered, and *why*. Here, then, is our Lord's first word under this new experience—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death*." It was thus, we perceive, in the very strictest sense, a deadly sorrow that He had now entered upon. It was a sorrow that would speedily cut off the entire current of His great life, by breaking up the fountain-head itself. Other sufferers before Him had died of heart-breaking sorrow. And less than theirs, surely, He did

not mean to intimate who thus described His own, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."

Does our Lord really teach us, then, that His sorrow was to prove His death? Then, of course, He means to reveal to us something of its character; He means to teach a lesson for us to learn. Hence there can be no presumption in our desiring that, to the same extent, we may learn and understand. It will, after all, be only a faint glimpse of the tremendous meaning of the Saviour's agony that we may hope thus to obtain; but it will be well if we get as much at least out of such a store of truth as to save us from the infection of error. How, then, we are surely entitled to ask—how did He come, of express purpose, thus to enter upon a sorrow under which He knew that He could not live?—a sorrow which, according to His own account, was the very means by which He would execute the declared design of giving up His life? Would such be the view suggested by a mere surrender of His own will to His Father's? But to *what* will, we are constrained to ask? Does the Father desire simply that the Son should die?—and for what? To show us how we too should die? But what death-sorrow does such a dying call for? Was it so very dreadful a thing for Jesus thus to surrender His will, that is to say, His life? The doing by Him as our Prototype of that which, when done by us (as the designed end of the whole), occasions something of pain perhaps, but certainly much more of pleasure—was it that which drew forth the unparalleled death-sorrow? And can we profess to see any harmony, any proportion, any kind of moral correspondence, between such a means and such an end?—anything, in short, to satisfy a reasonable mind as an answer to the question—Whence the death-

sorrow? Would it not rather seem as if the representing Saviour were enduring, in this sorrow, an experience which the represented sinner should with all his heart court and cherish—namely, the blessedness of self-sacrifice, with whatever admixture of pain on account of his corruption?

Or, are we told that the death-sorrow arose from the perfection of His sympathy with divine holiness? I answer as already, that He had never all His life been without that. It is easy to talk of the strange consequences arising from the perfect harmony with God of the Son's humanity. But it is much easier to lose ourselves in the maze of our speculations, than to have any intelligent idea as to how such a harmony, whether in humanity, or out of it, instead of solemnizing, elevating, and strengthening, should depress, disturb, agonize; and, by the rising flood of a death-sorrow, should first threaten, and then actually submerge the very life-fire in the bosom of Jesus.

After this, He fell on His face saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." And what was the cup? Of this we must say nothing positively, our one object being to learn what we can from the terrible experience of the Sufferer. But we may, at least, consider the connection that here discloses itself. Already a death-sorrow has seized Him; and now there is presented to Him a cup, from the drinking of which He shrinks with all the horror of which His perfect humanity is susceptible. What can that be? It is certainly not the mere dying to which He had hastened with such alacrity—Peter's objection to which He had so severely rebuked. Is it, then, the grand model-sacrifice of His own will that He shrinks from

—the noble exhibition to be now given, in the Person of its Representative, of how humanity must consent, for the sake of a real life, to lose that unreal life in which it had been so long indulging? Is this the bitter ingredient in that tremendous cup? Is it from this that the whole humanity of Jesus recoils with a shock to which no tragedy can show a parallel? Or, is it because, in some mysterious way, He has got nearer than ever to His Righteous and Holy Father—and now sees, as never before, the magnitude and malignity of the sin which He has undertaken to abolish? Is it from a closer sight, or a deeper sense, of this that He shrinks—so as to beg that He may, if possible, see no more of the abominable thing—or at least may taste no more of its unutterable bitterness? The question may sound as if the answer should be Yes; and such an answer might, apart from consideration, seem plausible. But what after all would it amount to but this—that a more thorough entering by a perfect man into the mind of God had induced an uncontrollable shrinking from a trial which God had appointed—yes, and a trial whose bitterness the perfect harmony between the two must already have neutralized, by converting it into a fresh experience of fellowship?

The reception of the petition is as remarkable as the petition itself. “There appeared an angel from heaven strengthening Him.” Strengthening Him for what?—For the bearing of that agony which would otherwise have made a premature end of His tender human frame. No heavenly visitor, indeed, may alleviate the agony. Not even a divine hand may withdraw the cup undrunk. But, with a view to the drinking of it, a peculiar strength shall be vouchsafed. And so—as the

result of all—"Coming to be" in an agony, He kept praying the more earnestly (intensely); and His sweat became as great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Here, again, is something new, "He began to be sorrowful"—that was a new thing. And mark, He "comes to be in an agony." And then the blood-clots oozing out fall to the ground. Here already is the death-sorrow beginning its work. What all this arose from is, of course, the question. Is it possible, then, soberly to believe that such an agony arose from the distress connected with the great Model-Sacrifice? And would such have been really a model for us? If the joy of the sacrifices modelled upon that of Calvary was, as the Saviour had taught, to exceed a hundredfold all their sorrow—what must have been the elevating satisfaction of Him whose honour and delight it was to show, in His own Person, how all other men were really to live, by the losing of that self-life which had been their death, disgrace, and misery!

Or, does the agony arise from the perfection of divine fellowship between the great Sufferer and His heavenly Father? This, for the reasons already given, it is hard to believe, and impossible, surely, if we fairly consider the extraordinary event that succeeds—"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour." For, surely, that darkness had a meaning; and, putting aside a very common poetical way of regarding it, what could the meaning be but that the heavenly Father was now hiding His face from the

* Luke xxii. 43, 44. The emphasis of these expressions should be carefully noted, *γενόμενος* (coming to be), and *ἐγένετο* (became)—thus intimating that the 'agony' was a new thing as much as the 'sweat.'

suffering Son? It might, of course, be said that the hiding of the face was from the guilty actors in the scene, not from the guiltless Sufferer. Not thus does the Sufferer Himself interpret it. For what is that voice which, bursting out from amid the mysterious darkness, sends forth its heart-rending interrogation? Yes, what is the voice? Let us ponder it well, for much it concerns us to understand its import—"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Mark the title, 'my God;' for amid all the agony of the desertion, the Sufferer can still, with unfaltering confidence, claim this relationship. And yet, observe, what the relationship is—"My God," not 'my *Father*.' This more endearing name had been used by Him not long before, and will be used again. But the present moment is too peculiar and too awful for that. So much for the address. Now for the question, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Is it so, then, that there has been some forsaking of the blessed Sufferer by His God? Yes, a most real forsaking. Such words, at such a moment, are the last of all words to be trifled with. It is but little, indeed, of what is involved in them that any human language is competent to express. But to think of them as going a hair's-breadth aside from the truth, or beyond it, would be a serious offence against Him who uttered them. What, then, but sin is it that ever leads to the forsaking of man by his God? And what forsaking by God can there ever be without the expression under some form or other of His disfavour, or displeasure? This, again, may be, as already noticed, in the way of loving chastisement, or of righteous judgment. But as to chastisement, what imaginable room for that is there here? What room for it is there any-

where except in connection with personal offence as needing correction? The very thought, in fact, is revolting, of chastisement in such a case as this; and yet between an impossible chastisement and a most real judgment, what alternative can we imagine? It is of no avail to answer that, "As a Son He was learning obedience by the things which He suffered." Unquestionably He was; and that was one of the precious fruits of all that He underwent. But our question now is not in regard to the fruits, but in regard to the suffering, and its cause. Judgment, then, we must conclude, is doing its tremendous work. The sinless Jesus is enduring in the form suitable to His position that to which sinful man is penally liable in the form suitable to his. He is being forsaken now—not by His disciples or His brethren, but by His God. Imagine the innocent Adam to have been thus forsaken—the holy angels in bliss to be now forsaken—think of the sun in the heavens as blotted out, and a world forsaken by its well known rays—these would be moderate horrors compared with the experience of the God-forsaken Sufferer on Calvary. For what light can approach to the brightness of that light in which He had lived? What fellowship of love can vie with that of which He could say, "Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world"? And He it is who is now forsaken! He who had so lately said, "Ye shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." And where is that Father now? Not with Him, it seems. Not with Him? And what, then, can be suffering?—what can be judgment?—what can be penal evil as endured within God's universe, if not the agony of a spirit thus consciously and mysteriously forsaken by

its God? To intensify and consummate this agony, what more can be imagined than just that that spirit is one that never—no, not in the remotest degree conceivable—ever approached the thought of itself forsaking God? This must have been agony indeed—that He, whose every feeling had been the most loving and holy, should now find Himself in the position of those who, being destitute of all likeness and all love to God, are left to realize the misery of being forsaken by Him. And is this, then, any part of a purely moral self-surrender? Is it an element in any way connected with the general doing of God's will that the holy Sufferer should thus be forsaken? Let us allow that it is often painful to renounce our own will for God's. Let us forget that all trouble of this sort springs solely from our own corruption; and then, indulging in a certain pleasing mysticism of sentiment or language, let us suppose the incarnate Word, in identifying Himself with us, rightly to endure in His great self-sacrifice a distress in some sort akin to what might wrongly occur in ours—yet what approach would there be in this to the agony of those God-forsaken moments? Who, in the very act of doing God's will—and that with the utmost intensity of love—expects to be forsaken by Him? What trace have we of any such principle in the Book, or government of God? How otherwise, then, can we conceive of the God-forsaken Jesus, except that, while "suffering for sin, the Just for the unjust," He is enduring that which was the real penalty of sin?—undergoing that death of which one of the most awful elements is just the experience of being God-abandoned?

Equally vain is it to think of explaining this terrible

experience by alleging, as in regard to the death-sorrow, the perfection of harmony with divine holiness in the Saviour's mind. For all such harmony, so far as we can comprehend it, must ever serve as a bond to unite—never as a bar to separate between the creature and his Creator—"Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross, *therefore* I love Thy testimonies!" "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee." "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name; for Thou only art holy? For Thy judgments are made manifest."

Or shall we argue against the idea of penalty in our Lord's sufferings, that they were nothing less than "a divine experience in humanity?" But what sort of 'divine experience,' was it to be thus forsaken by His God—and, in the agony of amazement, passionately to call out for the reason of it? We know that God can 'grieve' at being 'forsaken' by man; but it is hard to see how 'a *divine* experience' could involve the heart-breaking sorrow of being forsaken by God. A 'divine experience,' one would think, could contain nothing out of harmony with the most perfect divine communion. And yet here we have a feeling as unlike to that as it would be possible to conceive of in the holy Jesus.

And how, again, does the theory of atonement by 'confession' and 'repentance' harmonize with the 'Eli' cry? Here is something in the form of a complaint—a question is asked in regard to the suffering of a soul. But that complaint of the Sufferer is neither against Himself, nor the race of man, whose sins He is supposed to be confessing. That question is not—How man could be guilty of the unutterable folly and baseness of forsaking his God—but how God should be able to

forsake that Son who had never, by the most distant thought, or the most delicate feeling, forsaken His Father.

Does it still appear as if there were in the explanation, which the Saviour's 'substitution' furnishes of all this, a want of perfect clearness, with the appearance of a certain confusion? And how, on any reasonable principle, can it be otherwise? The problem is to explain that direst of confusion ever expressed by an agonized spirit—"My God, my God, *why* hast *Thou* forsaken *Me*?" He understands it all, and yet He speaks, and shall we not say *feels*, as if He did not understand it. Is it not plain, in short, that there is an element altogether peculiar in the matter? Jesus is in a position to which there never was, and never can be, a parallel. Sinless, He is suffering as a sinner should suffer. Loved to perfection by His Father—cherished and favoured as none else could ever be—He is subjected to an experience of divine forsaking more bitter and crushing than creature ever knew, more dreadful than mind ever conceived. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me;"—"My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken *Me*?" What must have been the agony of those hours, when the patient, uncomplaining One could allow Himself thus passionately to cry for relief; and, as if that were a small thing, even to question, as it were, from the depths of despair, His Father's faithfulness and friendship? Yes, and while He knew all the time how short were to be the agony and desertion—and how certainly He should that very day be in Paradise, with the sinner whom now, by means of this very suffering, He was redeeming from destruction.

Truly it is a mystery of suffering. And why should it not be? But if, as a mystery, it defies human wisdom to fathom it, it equally defies human cunning to have contrived it. The very conception of it is divine. The revelation of it is divine. It has that about it which, by the very cloud of its own brightness, must ever be veiled from our comprehension. And it has that also which comes down to the very level of our humanity, whether in the satisfaction which it yields to a burdened conscience, or the simplicity with which it presents itself to an unbiassed understanding. It so entirely differs, indeed, from all the previous experience of the Saviour, that we need not wonder if the unbeliever, seeing it from his own point of view, chooses to regard it as a gratuitous fiction. But a deeper reflection would show him that there can be nothing less fiction-like, whether in its own character, or its antecedents;—while the perfect harmony between the appalling experience of those hours and the Christian truth of ‘substitution’ sets the whole upon the basis of a most solid reality. Grant that we cannot define what must have been the precise feeling and action of the divine mind, in its judicial view and treatment of the glorious Sufferer;—yet one thing we can very clearly see, and that is the spectacle which the cross presents of the Son of God who had already taken our nature, as now taking upon Him our sin and curse, and exhausting in our stead that death which is the wages of sin. This we can see, feel, apply, and build our eternal hope upon. And thus seeing, our faith is not blind; thus building, it is not idle.

One or two points still call for notice.

After the mysterious "Eli, Eli," &c., there now comes the cry, "*I thirst.*" And if this, like the other circumstances, had a moral as well as a natural significance, then we can see the suitableness of the experience suggested by it. For He by whom the Sufferer is now forsaken, is the very "Fountain of living waters;"—while the forsaken One is suffering and thirsting in the room of those who, having forsaken the fountain, themselves deserved to endure the thirst.

And now the consummation, "IT IS FINISHED." And then, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit;" upon which "He bowed His head and gave up the ghost."

Of what, then, did Jesus die? Not of His bodily wounds; for the time was entirely insufficient for such a result. Death by crucifixion was, in ordinary circumstances, a matter rather of days than of hours. And everything serves to show that there was no peculiar exhaustion in the Sufferer on Calvary, to render His end so exceptionally rapid. His inward suffering might well, indeed, have brought Him down, within those few hours, to the lowest physical condition; but then it had not, and the reason is plain;—the 'strengthening' by the angel had counteracted the merely natural operation. Of what, then, did He die? His own words have already told us—confirmed as these now are by the circumstance of the blood and water from the pierced side. For those had declared that His sorrow was "unto death;" and the mixed stream, thus immediately after death, was a sure indication that His heart had broken.* Thus, with all the supernatural 'strength-

* See Dr. Stroud's "Physical Cause of the Death of Christ," who

ening' of the body, the soul-'agony' which followed was beyond nature's endurance; since not even *His* entreaty had procured the removal of the cup, nor the 'Eli, Eli' had made the desertion less dreadful. And thus it was really the sorrow, or agony of *His* soul—however much aggravated by the bodily torture—which actually broke up the fountain of life in the Son of Man, and occasioned that death which has become the most remarkable fact in the history of the world. He "died for our sins according to the Scriptures;" and these Scriptures, by their few but very distinct intimations, leave us no room to question that the actual dying is to be directly attributed not to any iron driven into Him by Roman hands; but to the iron which had entered into *His* soul in the form of that agony which had come upon Him as "bearing our sins in *His* own body to the tree."

Connect now into one these various incidents. Some days before the end He announces *His* death, with bright anticipation of its consequences, but overwhelming trouble because of its character. On the night preceding it, He calmly and pleasantly deals out the bread and wine which symbolized *His* body and blood; at the same time looking forward with joy to that kingdom of which the cross was to be the foundation. He then represents *His* Father, as with the rod in *His* hand, and the word in *His* mouth, "*I will smite.*" After that, "*He began to be sorrowful and very heavy;*" declaring that *His* "soul was exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death.*" But as yet He had not drunk *the cup*; for there was

gives decisive instances of persons shouting out with a sort of preternatural energy, during the momentary interval between rupture of the heart and death—pp. 126, 7.

still room for the prayer that He might, if possible, be delivered from that. Then the strange answer of the "angel strengthening Him," and His "*coming to be in an agony*." And such must, surely, have been *the very cup* from which He had shrunk—even THIS AGONY with the darkness experience—the 'lama sabachthani' cry. Nor could it be of chance, or without a special meaning, that just then He cried, "I thirst;" and then, "It is finished;" and—the darkness and desertion being now over—"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." The life is now given up; and, very shortly after, the piercing of the side reveals, on the one hand, what manner of death the Saviour had died; and, on the other, what manner of blessing was to flow from that death.

Put all together, and say whether such a chain of events can be the result either of chance, or contrivance. Say also whether they can be expressive either of a model self-sacrifice—the real characteristics of which should be so very different from all this—or of a vicarious confession of which there is no vestige in these dying utterances. Can we, in short, on any known principles of human nature, explain such a train of thought and feeling—unique and extraordinary as it is—apart from that actual sin-bearing in our room, with which the Scripture so clearly associates it?

CHAPTER XIII.

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY. ACTS—ROMANS.

THE outline drawn by our Lord has been amply filled in by His Apostles. For reasons sufficiently obvious, besides others that may be obscure, the Master said but little in regard to the special character and object of His death. Openly to have spoken of it, as the appointed means of our redemption, would almost have been to preclude the Jews from a natural and free course of action, and might even have seemed like tempting them to an act in His view so important for the world. It is one of the marvels, in short, of the Saviour's teaching that He should have gone so far, and no farther in this respect—should have spoken out as He did, and then been silent—should have had so much on His mind, and so little in His mouth, about such an event—so little, in fact, that only two perfectly distinct and express utterances are recorded as made by Him, and these not till within a week of His passion. On the other hand, the act being once over, there was no further reason for silence as to its nature and design. Hence, while the Lord Himself had shown such an extraordinary reserve on the subject, His followers made it the chief topic of their preaching—unveiling, with as little disguise as the sunlight, the whole purpose of their Master in giving Himself up to be crucified. And yet, even in such circumstances, they did this as naturally

as if it had never been kept back. Such is the consistency of honesty and truth.

What, then, according to Apostolic testimony, are we to understand as to the purpose, immediate and specific, of our Lord's death—that purpose, in short, which distinguishes it from everything else in Christianity? We answer, without hesitation, that that purpose was to make an atonement or propitiation for our sin, in order that it might be pardoned, and we reconciled to God;—our present concern being to show that it involves a most real *substitution* of the dying Saviour in the place of the dying sinner. As to any exact equivalent of a price offered as balanced against the purchase effected—so many stripes, or so much of suffering, for the securing of a proportionate amount of good—as to anything of this kind, the Bible, as I understand it, says nothing. But if it teaches with clearness anything at all, it does, I believe, teach this, that on Calvary there did take place an offering of *life for life*, as real as any substitution that the world ever saw—as fit to satisfy the conscience in the court of God as any such arrangement ever was to satisfy the cravings of man in the concerns of this world; and that, no the less truly because it transcends all such matters as the divine, in its infinitude, ever must exceed the concerns of a day.

We begin with the Apostolic testimony as given in the 'Acts'; and it will be of no small consequence rightly to appreciate the view in which that presents the cardinal blessing of 'forgiveness'—as a thing indeed which, from the beginning to the end of the book, seems

never out of sight. It occurs in the very first direction to the awakened at Pentecost—"Repent, and be baptized every one of you, (resting, believing) on the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (ii. 38.) Does it seem that, in inserting these words, I am taking a liberty with Peter's exhortation? But what alternative have we? The word 'baptize' is never, and for an obvious reason, followed by any preposition except *in* or *into*; and yet here we have neither of these, but *on*, or *upon*—thus obliging us, according to a very common Biblical style, to fill in what is implied, as indicated by what is expressed. Thus, too, "the remission of sins" falls into its proper connection with what has just preceded; being separated from the improper connection with baptism—according to which, however, the expression would not mean "baptized for," but "into the remission of sins"—a style not found in Scripture. I need not say how important this is, if correct; nor do I hesitate, as regards that, to appeal to any who are prepared to take the Scripture as it stands—all doctrines of the present, or creeds of the past, notwithstanding.

The next reference (iii. 19) is important as containing a strong expression for 'forgiveness'—"Repent, and be converted, that your sins *may be blotted out*." This is of the greater consequence, in connection with the moral condition specified—as designating not a process, or operation, but a very distinct and decisive *act*. There can be little question about the force of a word which itself means complete obliteration, and of which the following is nearly all that we find in the Greek Scriptures—"According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies *blot out* my transgressions;" "Hide Thy face from my sins, and *blot out* all mine iniquities" (Psalm

li. 1, 9); "I, even I, am He that *blotteth out* thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah xliii. 25; *cf.* xliv. 22); "Forgive not their iniquity, neither *blot out* their sin from thy sight" (Jer. xviii. 23); "*Blot* me, I pray thee, out of thy book" (Exod. xxxii. 32, *cf.* Rev. iii. 5); "*Blotting out* the handwriting of ordinances that was against us." (Col. ii. 14.)

In the same passage there is still another expression, (v. 23), very clearly showing, by way of contrast, what this great blessing of the 'blotting out of sin' involves—"Every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be *destroyed* from among the people." But now—in order to save from this destruction, and bestow the blessing promised through Abraham's seed—"God, having raised up His Son (servant) Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." It is precisely the connection between the kindred blessings of repentance and remission, which is expressly stated in a subsequent address—"Him hath God exalted with His right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (v. 31.) Then Stephen will tell us how he understands 'forgiveness' when he prays—"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." (vii. 60.) And Peter again, when he so earnestly implores the impious sorcerer—"Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." (viii. 22.) We may also suppose to ourselves what thoughts Philip had of the great redeeming work, when, from the opened Scripture, he preached Jesus to the eunuch—the same Scripture which had spoken of "the Lord laying on Him the iniquity of us all," and of "His soul making a trespass-offering." For, whatever men may think

now, it would have been hard for Philip to think of a trespass-offering, apart at once from the ample compensation which accompanied it, and the "atonement made" for the offerer that his offence "might be forgiven him."

The next scene that gives any view of Apostolic doctrine is that in the presence of Cornelius, when Peter came to "tell him words whereby he and his house might be *saved*;" and when God, by this means, "opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." What, then, were the words fraught with such weighty consequences? We have but a specimen of them, and it can hardly be said to amount to more than this—confining ourselves to what may fairly be taken as the 'saving' element in the message—"The word which God sent, *preaching peace* by Jesus Christ;" and how?—"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall *receive remission of sins*." (x. 36-43; xi. 14.) Hence, as we see, Cornelius needed to be saved; he needed remission of sins, and peace with God; and he got it all through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

By the mouth of another witness we find the same truth established. It is that of the new Apostle in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch—"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." A proclamation of forgiveness, through an express Mediator, from a Sovereign to his subjects—above all, from God to man—that should be a very distinct, unambiguous affair. God ready to pardon, when He might have punished—such, surely, is the meaning of the proclama-

tion. And what else can be the meaning of the statement appended to it—"By Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses"? (xiii. 38, 39.) For to be justified from anything by the law of Moses always implied that a man was in some way 'bearing sin,' and signified a most direct clearance from it, as regarded his liability to punishment on its account. The things from which a man could thus be cleared were chiefly of a ceremonial kind, including at the same time certain well-defined moral offences. But now, says the Apostle, there is proclaimed to you a forgiveness of all sins—a justification from all things, however great the evil and guilt involved in them; and however impotent might be the law of Moses to clear you from an iota of their consequences. And such is "the word of this salvation sent" to those Jews then, and "to the ends of the earth" now. This is the "everlasting life" rejected then, and ever since, by some; while both then and now, "as many as were *arrayed* for eternal life believed." The city was divided, as it were, into two armies—one contending for present things, civil, social, ecclesiastical;—while the other, "drawn up"* in the determination to obtain the eternal life presented to them, believed on that Jesus in whom they saw forgiveness, justification, or in one word, salvation, brought to their doors.

After this, it is but little that we find throughout the book, in regard to the subjects of Apostolic preaching. But, as bearing on our point, we hear of "Christ purchasing the church with His own blood," (xx. 28)—which, certainly, would be a very distinct Jewish mode

* Is not this the simple sense of the remarkable words—*καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*? (Acts xiii. 48.)

of expressing a true and actual ransom; and we find that the Apostle, in the very hour of his own awakening, received the commission to preach to the Gentiles, "that they might receive *forgiveness of sins*." (xxvi. 18.) And if, in addition to doctrine, we want examples of souls being pardoned who had just been trembling under the burden of guilt and the danger of punishment—we can have none more distinct than the multitude on Pentecost, the jailer in Philippi, and the man of Tarsus himself.

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

The first passage calling for notice is in chap. iii. 19–26. There we find the whole world represented as "guilty before God"—with no possibility of any one being "justified by the deeds of the law;" since "by the law is the knowledge of sin." In this state of things there appears "a righteousness of God, without (apart from) law"—as a thing which "is unto all, and upon all them that believe," without distinction; for "all have sinned, and come short of (have missed or failed to reach) the glory of God." The result is that we are now "justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." 'Guilty,' on the one hand, 'justified,' on the other—the meaning of such words should not be uncertain. And as to 'redemption,' the view given us is this—"Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission (pretermission) of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Observe here (1) The free justification spoken of comes to us "through the *redemption* that is in Christ." (2) This redemption comes through Him—as "set forth to be a *propitiation*"—an expression which derives its peculiar force from the reference to the mercy-seat, or 'propitiatory covering' of the ark. It appears, in short, that, as the blood sprinkled upon the sacred chest put away the judgment of the law as recorded against a sinful nation, so the blood of Christ puts away the judgment which declares us guilty, and excludes us from "the glory of God." (3) It is through faith in the *blood thus shed* that Christ becomes the Saviour of souls individually. (4) By this means God exhibits the righteousness which all along He had been exercising, when He passed over sin in the by-gone ages. (5) The design of this "righteousness without law," this "redemption," and "propitiation" through the blood of Christ, is "that God might be just, and the justifier * of him that believeth in Jesus."

All this should, surely, speak for itself; and I can only leave it to do so, in connection with the explanation formerly given of "the propitiatory covering."

Going to the next chapter, we find the Apostle teaching the forgiveness of sin, in the words of David whose idea of it was certainly both plain and primitive—"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities

* Is it not far more in accordance with Greek, and New Testament idiom, to take the construction as purely participial, rather than to combine *εἶναι* with *δικαιοῦντα* into a verbal sense—the meaning thus being—"That He might be just, even when justifying." See chap. xvii. below.

are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Such, as far as I know, is the view that the world has always had of the forgiveness of sin, namely, as a not imputing or reckoning of it to the guilty party. As when Shimei, guilt-stricken, and trembling for his life, came to David, saying, "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me . . . for thy servant doth know that I have sinned;"—the king's answer being, "Thou shalt not die."* (2 Sam. xix. 19, 23.) And this first of blessings comes to us, we are further told, through Him "who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." But with what view was Christ delivered to death for our offences, except that we, who must otherwise have been delivered, might not be so? And, if *justification* has been procured for us through His resurrection, does not this imply that otherwise our lot was *condemnation*? In a word, He is delivered to death for the sin of a condemned company, that, He being raised again, they may be no more condemned, but justified. Let this, again, speak for itself. And can it mean less than that He went into the prison as bearing the death-sentence; and came out, as having exhausted it to the utmost? Is it going beyond this Apostolic testimony if we say that our Lord paid the debt when He died, and, when He rose, displayed before heaven and earth, by the light of the resurrection morn, His Father's acquittal and discharge for the whole?†

* So, in regard to one unduly slaughtering his beast—"Blood shall be *imputed* unto that man; and he shall be *cut off* from among his people." (Lev. xvii. 4.)

† Theodoret says upon this passage—"On account of our sins He underwent suffering that He might discharge our debt (*ὅπως ἐκτίσῃ τὸ ἡμέτερον χρέος*)."

Proceeding with the Epistle, we find, in the next chapter, that "Christ died for the ungodly." And who were they? They were those who had forfeited the life everlasting—who had "sinned and come short of the glory of God." For these He died, that they, recovering the lost inheritance, might even now glory in the hope of it. About such language there should surely be no ambiguity. Is there any? * Then what question can there be as to the sense of—"Scarcely *for* a righteous man will one die?" Or, "Peradventure *for* a good man some would even dare to die?" For, whatever such dying means, then in the same sense has Christ *died for us*, sinners, impotent, ungodly. It matters not how far His 'dying' may surpass the supposed human 'dying' in all other respects. Enough for our purpose if the latter implied, or included, as the Apostle puts it—which it certainly did—the idea of giving up one life

* It is more than interesting to have the very oldest post-biblical Christian testimony on this subject. Clement thus writes to the Corinthians. (chap. xlix.)—"On account of the love which He had to us, our Lord Jesus Christ gave His blood for us (*ὑπὲρ*), and His flesh for our flesh, and His life for our lives" (*ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν*). In illustration of which we find in chap. lv.:—"To take examples from the heathen—many kings and rulers, in time of pestilence, moved by the oracle, have given themselves to death, that, by their own blood, they might deliver the citizens." In connection with the first of these passages we find Irenaeus (v. i. 1) saying—"With His own blood the Lord redeemed us, giving His life for (*ὑπὲρ*) our lives, and His flesh for (*ἀντὶ*) our flesh" (plural). Precisely to the same purpose Origen writes, on our present passage, and *Contra Celsum* i. § 31, referring to Clement's words, and accepting the Apostle's language in the same sense. Such is the testimony of these three to the sense of Christ's 'dying for us;' nor is the value of this at all impaired by the eccentric view which the last two took of the ransom as offered to the enemy of man! Enough that they could not, with all their wanderings, get away from the reality of the *ransom*.

for the rescuing of another. It is of no use to contend that, as one man may generously die to save another from some great evil, without "a mere substitution to die a penal death," so Christ died to save us from sin, without any substitution in the matter. We need more than this in order to a true parallel. We need to know that the one man *died for* his friend—with this distinct view that the friend might not himself die.* And, further, if the character of a thing can derive any light from its consequences, then let this 'dying' stand out in greater clearness when we read—"Much more being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Rom. v. 5-10.) The information seems wonderfully plain. "Justified," that is, having "righteousness imputed," and "sin not imputed" (as was taught in the previous chapter); and this, "through the blood of Christ;"—through "Christ dying for us," as one man will sometimes "die for another;"—"saved from wrath;"—"reconciled to God through the death of His Son." Such are the ideas—so distinct all of them that misunderstanding would have seemed impossible.

* The following, in opposition to the ordinary view, will be found, I think, more positive than logical—"It is scarcely possible to imagine any statement more destructive than this (Rom. v. 6-8) to the theory of a mere substitution to die a penal death. St. Paul expressly explains the death of Christ by the devotion of one man who would die for another. His motive is not to satisfy a demand of justice by rendering an equivalent, but to save through self-sacrifice. As a man might die to save his wife from death or outrage, so Christ died to save ungodly men from the whole evil of their condition." (J. Ll. Davies, in "Tracts for Priests and People." xiii. p. 47.)

Before proceeding we should give some attention to the important word 'reconcile.' Now we are freely told by various modern writers that the meaning of this in the passage before us, and the kindred one 2 Cor. v. 18-20, is simply to win back for God the estranged affections of man. And less than this, of course, God can never aim at, or an honest mind rest in. No reconciliation, in short, according to God's plan, is possible unless accompanied by this. But still this is not reconciliation.* For, according to the well-understood acceptation of the word, it signifies a return to *favour* after a state of variance. The word in the original (καταλάσσω) clearly means, to 'change in relation to;' that is, to alter the relation of one person to another—its constant reference being to that peculiar change which has just been noted. Any Greek Lexicon will show this. The expression not occurring in the Septuagint, we can only refer to the use of the kindred word (διαλάσσω) as when the Philistines plead that David would naturally seek to regain, by their heads, the favour of his king. (1 Sam. xxix. 4.) The meaning, namely, cessation from variance, is the same in the single passage where the word occurs in the New Testament. (Matt. v. 23, 24.) As to the more usual expression (καταλάσσω) we find it in Josephus, who speaks of "entreating God to be *reconciled* to Saul, and not to be angry with him." (Antt. vi. 7. 4); and so of "a father being *reconciled* to his son, and putting away his anger towards him." (vii. 8. 4.)

* It is important to notice that even DeWette, whose prepossessions were all the other way, could not refrain from remarking here—"In each case, viz.: 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Col. i. 21; Eph. ii. 16, must the reconciliation be regarded as made through the atoning death of Jesus, und die von Gott erlassener Sünden-schuld."

Here the meaning plainly is, a restoring to favour of the party that had been shut out from it. One important element will not be overlooked, and that is the change of mind or action in the superior party. To the same purpose he says that the Jews begged Moses to act as a 'reconciler'—that is, to seek to reconcile God to them. So in the Apocrypha we find the word similarly applied to express the idea of God's being reconciled to men. (2 Macc. i. 5; vii. 33.) In which cases two things are observable: (1) The meaning of the word as implying simply a restoration to favour; (2) The idea that there is wanted some change on the part of God. The first of these appears from the word, and the whole of the sentiment expressed. The second from the manner in which it is applied. Now mark the difference. In the New Testament, the same word is employed in its well-known sense, as signifying a return to favour; but it is never once referred to God. That is to say, God is not spoken of as "reconciled to man"—but man as "reconciled to God," and "God as reconciling the world to Himself." In a word, the change is in man, not in God. But no the less on that account is there distinctly signified by the word 'reconcile,' the essential idea of a return to favour.

Besides the two cardinal passages with which we are now concerned, the word (verb or noun) occurs only twice in the New Testament, and each time in the usual sense. Thus (1 Cor. vii. 11) the Christian wife who has been separated from an unbelieving husband is to remain unmarried, or to be 'reconciled' to him. There was a loss of his favour in the leaving him; there is now a choice given her of seeking to return to it. And so the 'reconciliation' of the Gentiles is spoken of as

the counterpart to the 'casting away' of the Jews. (Rom. xi. 15.) But this clearly signifies the gaining and the losing of the divine favour. It is a relative, not a moral, change that is indicated in either case.

See, then, how the word will stand in our passage—
 "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."—If when we were enemies, and as such were "guilty before Him"—
 "having come short of His glory," and with "His wrath revealed against us" (iii. 19, 23; i. 18);—if, when in this state, we were 'reconciled' to God, that is, restored to His favour—not by divine power renewing and purifying, but "by the *death* of His Son" (that death which serves for propitiation and justification, iii. 25; v. 9);—if we were thus reconciled, "much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (perfectly delivered from every evil now affecting us) by His life." Yes, there will still be ample opportunity for the action upon us of a living Saviour; but, as for our reconciliation, it comes, comes entirely, with all reverence let us recognize it, not by His life at all, but altogether by His death; and by that too as actually contrasted with the life. And thus "we glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (dying for us) we have now *obtained reconciliation.*"

Passing over, for the present, the deeply interesting and important paragraph that follows in illustration of the justification and reconciliation already set forth—we find, at the commencement of the 8th chapter, a passage which we must not overlook;—"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and *for sin*

condemned sin in the flesh.” Now this expression ‘for sin’ (*περὶ ἁμαρτίας*) is precisely the one employed by the Septuagint for ‘sin-offering.’ (*cf.* Heb. x. 6.) Why, therefore, should it not be the same here—in an Epistle where the Jews are so directly appealed to? Whatever, then, was characteristic of the sin-offering, that we may regard as here transferred to Christ. And thus, while sin was reigning as a tyrant in the world—reigning for the condemnation (ch. v.), the corruption (ch. vi.), and the enslavement of man (ch. vii.)—God sends His own Son, in the sinner’s likeness, and as an actual sacrifice for sin, in the well understood sense of the words—thus condemning sin in the flesh, and proclaiming the overthrow of its terrible dominion. Sin, which had procured man’s condemnation is itself condemned, so that “there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” Sin, which had overpowered man, is itself overpowered; and now “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” “If we live after the flesh,” indeed, “we shall still die,” notwithstanding all that Christ has done to save. “But if, through the Spirit, we put to death the deeds of the body we shall live.” And this is the salvation which comes to us, through the death and life of the Redeemer.

Now here, surely, if anywhere, the Apostle should have expressed, if he had entertained it, the belief which is ascribed to him about “human nature being offered up (by Christ) in spotless sacrifice to the Father”—“the union of Christ with His brethren rendering the gift propitiatory in its effect upon them.”* But such expressions St. Paul did not employ, and such sentiments

* Rev. F. Garden, in “Tracts for Priests,” &c. iii. p. 18.

he did not entertain. Confusion like this had no place in his mind or system. "Human nature offered to God" in the person of the God-man, and "the gift *rendered propitiatory* in its effect upon men" as Christ's brethren!—that surely is not the scriptural idea, nor any other that we are acquainted with, of propitiation. Such a gift could never require to be "rendered propitiatory." No, according to the Scripture, Christ offered, not human nature, but HIMSELF; while, according to the same Scripture, that which is sacrificed for sin is not saved, and what is to be saved is not thus sacrificed.

We come now to the glowing passage at the end of the same chapter, where we are told of God's "not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up to the death for us all." Now, it is conceivable that one might give himself up to death for another who, on his part, was under no such risk, but apprehensive only of some other kind of evil, to avert which the generous friend is ready to sacrifice his life. And then, of course, the dying of the one is not *instead of* the other, but only on his behalf. But how can we conceive of such a thing, where the evil to be averted, whatever else it might be, was, in the first place, just a death most miserable?—And this, too, in connection with the blessing, "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?"—as the opposite of that state of wrath which the Redeemer came to save from, and of which the meaning was—'It is God that condemneth, who is he that justifieth?'

So much for the great truth of the Saviour's substitutionary death in this Epistle. And surely it is no derogation from this if, at other times, the writer refers

to it under different aspects. 'Different' does not mean 'contrary.' Thus, because "Christ both died and rose that He might be Lord of the dead and living," why should that interfere with the other truth that "He died for us" in the sense so clearly expressed throughout? (ch. xiv. 9, *cf.* 15.) Or why should we be hindered from believing that He actually died instead of us, in the sense in which one man may die instead of another, because, in a subsequent portion, Christians are regarded as having had "their old man crucified with Him"—as having "died with Him," and been "buried with Him?" (ch. v. 7, *cf.* vi. 2-8.) There is surely no incongruity in the two views—His so loving us and hating our sins, on the one hand, as to die the death to which we were doomed; and on the other hand, our so entering into His spirit as to give up our old man to a like crucifixion and death? Why should our *dying to sin* in the one sense interfere with Christ's *dying for us* in the other, any more than His dying interferes with ours? There was room in the Apostolic mind and heart for the two views. And it is a sad thing if we, under whatever show of warmth or enlargement, be too narrow or cold to admit them both—instead of feeling how excellent is each by itself, while it needs the two combined to make up the one SALVATION.

CHAPTER XIV.

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY—(CONTINUED.)

FIRST CORINTHIANS—TITUS.

IN the *First Epistle to the Corinthians* we find the Apostle speaking of it as the thing “which he had delivered to them first of all, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.” (1 Cor. xv. 3.) Now take the statement in this, the simplest of all its forms, and it is quite easy to speak of it as only meaning that Christ died on account of our sins, namely, with the view of turning us from them. But would this occur to any one reading with the honest purpose of knowing the true sense of the words? For here, on the one side, is the fact that *we were to have died for our own sins*; and there, on the other, the fact of the sinless Christ “*dying for them*.” Put the two together, and what follows but the view of His dying the death which we were to have died, that is to say, His really dying for our sins, instead of our dying for them? And then, as this was the plain sense of the expression, so it was the one that would inevitably be suggested to an ancient reader by that world-wide context of sacrifice in which he saw the words as standing. There was no idea more familiar to a Greek than that of dying as an atoning, substitutionary sacrifice. There was no question more natural to any awakened spirit in those days than

—"Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah vi. 7.) Nothing could be more unambiguous than such language. But where, amid all the ideas of antiquity—whether as regards the practices of the world, or the principles of revelation—shall we find any one thing pointing us to the modern view of Christ's dying for our sins? And, if we accompany the Apostle to the end of his grand exposition of the resurrection, what thought but the one that he began with could have been in his mind when he burst out into the soul-stirring exclamation—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"—Yes, gives us victory over sin and death, in spite of the power with which the righteous law had armed them;—and gives it how, but through the Redeemer's *dying for our sins*, and thus carrying off our *death* in His own dying body? Such was the Apostolic gospel of "Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (i. 23, 24.)

In the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* we have some very distinct testimony to the character of the Saviour's work—"The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) Such was the view taken by the Apostle of his Saviour's

death—a view which, having at first kindled, now daily fed that consuming passion of love by which he was impelled in his extraordinary career. And the ‘judgment’ indicated was, we may be sure, as accurate as the affection was ardent. Now, this judgment embraces two conclusions which he had come to in regard to the ‘death.’ As to the second of these, there will be no question; and yet the other touches a matter no less vital—“We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were (are) all dead.” How this great sentence can be otherwise explained than as our English version suggests, I have never yet understood, nor how any other view can suit either the language or the argument. For what can be more fit in itself? what more agreeable to the words? * or what can form a stronger reason for ‘constraining love’ than, from our Lord’s death, to reason backwards to that death of our own, which *it*

* It is certainly not in accordance either with any natural law of thought, or with the Apostle’s style, to take the naked expression *died*, or *are dead*, as involving the additional idea ‘*in or with Christ*.’ When this was his meaning he took care to signify it. See Rom. vi. 3–11, (comparing 7 with 8); Gal. ii. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 11; *cf.* Eph. ii. 5, 6.—In regard to the objection against taking the word ἀπέθανον as meaning ‘were dead,’ or rather, ‘are dead,’ it should be enough to answer that such is the expression constantly employed throughout the Gospels in that sense. In regard to ἅπα being, as has been said, improperly taken to express an inference bearing upon something *past*, see Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20. Chrysostom saw none of these difficulties when he wrote (Hom. xi. on 2 Cor.), “Surely, then, it was because all were lost, saith he; for except all were lost, He had not died for all.” And again, νεκροὶ πάντες· πάντες γὰρ, φησιν, ἀπέθανον.—Theodoret takes the same view when he says, “We are inflamed with the love of Christ, judging that, when we were all subject to death (πάντων ἡμῶν ὑποκειμένων θανάτῳ), He alone took upon Himself the death which was for us” (τὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατεδέξατο θάνατον).

of necessity implies, and from which *it* alone delivers? But this is not our question at present. The question is—what good sense there can possibly be in these remarkable words, without allowing, at some point, a *most real substitution*, in virtue of which the dying of Christ saves us from the same on our part? And then His dying, it will be seen, not only implies a death in all; but, by means of it, *some* come to live. He died for those who otherwise had a death of their own to die. (This I say here, not as assuming our sense of the disputed clause, but as a truth independent of the present passage.) And, He having thus died for all, those who obtain the benefit of that death do not now die but live. Is there here, then, I earnestly ask, anything wanting to the idea, in the most complete sense, of a substitutionary death, and a ransomed life? It is to no purpose to urge against us the ultimate object of the Redeemer's death as being "*that we should live to Him.*" Perfectly true; but its *character* is stated as distinctly as its *object*. And if the object be *consecration*, the character is *substitution*.

We may here take a specimen of the manner in which this passage has been handled—"The Apostle does not say that Christ died *instead of* all, but as the Head and Representative of all. He no more died that we might not die, than He rose again that we might not rise again."* Yes, but if otherwise we must have died and then the Saviour *died for us*—this surely is nothing less than '*dying that we might not die.*' And not only so, but it is expressly said that, as the fruit of His dying, we *live*—the argument being, that we, thus living, should not henceforth live to ourselves. In regard to

* J. Ll. Davies, "Work of Christ," p. 25.

the last sentence of the passage just quoted, it may perhaps be counted an acute and satisfactory mode of arguing; but it forgets one thing which we can never forget—namely, that the style in question (Christ's 'rising for' us) is not Scriptural. And yet surely He rose as well as died, *on our account*. He rose as well as died, in the character of Head and Representative—while yet the expression before us must be sought for outside the Bible. Thus, of course, it naturally occurs in the writers whom we are now reviewing; and has frequently been employed by 'evangelical' writers without seeing what was involved in it. Thus also it occurs in the English Baptismal Service, and the Collect for Easter Eve, ("who died, and was buried, and rose again for us.") Such a style only serves, by way of contrast, to bring into prominence the absence of it in Scripture, which never says that Christ was *buried* for us, or *rose again* for us, but only *died* for us; and such a distinction must imply a very real difference. It is quite true that, in the present passage (2 Cor. v. 15), the words 'for us' are put *before* 'died and rose again'—so that they *might*, as far as this passage goes, apply to both. But in no other passage is there even this amount of ambiguity; for at the most it is nothing more. In all these the 'for' is connected simply with the 'dying,' never with the previous life, or the burial, or resurrection. Shall we take advantage, then, of what would be a merely possible sense in one passage, without regard to all the passages which there are to clear away the ambiguity? Can we not see that, as the Apostle employed the words, there was no ambiguity at all? The 'dying for' was a Scriptural expression; the 'rising for' was not. He could afford therefore to say, as in this

single case he has said—"Who for us died, and rose again"—knowing that his readers would understand him to mean just what, happily, we have been led to understand—"Who died for us, and rose again." *

The following is the remainder of the passage just remarked upon—"When He died, His members, or those comprehended in Him, died also. He died and rose again, that His death and rising might be a law to them—that they might die and rise with Him."—I answer that this is not said of His members, but of *all men*. If I be told that all men *are* His members—then why, I ask, say 'all' in one clause, and only 'those that live' in the other, if the two companies are identical? Observe also how the Apostolic view is entirely altered at the end of the quotation—"A law to them *that they might die* and rise with Him." No, not a word of that has the Apostle written. With him, it is no *law* of 'might,' but the simple *fact* of '*did die*,' or '*are dead*.'

Having thus represented his general Christian principles, and at the same time the living spring that supplied them with their amazing power, the Apostle goes on to exhibit the ministry with which he and his associates had been entrusted—"All things are of God" (especially all the things which pertain to the new

* The passages in which 'for,' mostly ὑπέρ, sometimes ἀντί or περί is connected with 'die' or some equivalent expression are these—Matt. xx. 28 (ἀντί); xxvi. 28 (περί); Mark x. 45; John x. 11, 15; xv. 13; Rom. v. 6-8; viii. 32; xiv. 15; 1 Cor. viii. 11; xi. 24; xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 21; Gal. ii. 20; iii. 13; Eph. v. 2, 25; 1 Thess. v. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 6, (ἀντίλυτρον ὑπέρ); Titus ii. 14; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Peter iv. 1; 1 John ii. 2, (περί three times); iii. 16; iv. 10, (περί.) We find ὑπέρ connected with 'intercede' in Romans viii. 27, 34; Heb. vii. 25.

creation in Christ as just described), “who hath *reconciled* us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of *reconciliation*.” The meaning of this expression has been already considered. And now it may safely be assumed in connection with an epistle to a Greek church, that if there was anything understood in Greece, amid the endless contention of its cities and the clash of their factions, it was the meaning and importance of ‘reconciliation’—the idea always being that of a return or restoration to favour—as a thing which had been lost, or interrupted. Nothing in that distracted land, in short, had been more essential to the life of one party than just such reconciliation to some other; no character was of more importance than that of the ‘reconciler.’ Now the terms in which they expressed this idea were just those of our Apostle in expressing his. Is it not, then, worse than idle to expect such readers to understand that St. Paul, in speaking of ‘reconciliation to God,’ did not mean what the words meant, a restoration to the divine favour, but a drawing out of the heart to the divine Being—that is to say, a renewal of the mind, or *repentance* for sin? Could it be in such an unnatural sense that he said—“He hath reconciled us to Himself”? Variance of the most dreadful kind there had been. For he who now speaks of himself and his friends as reconciled had spoken elsewhere of them all as once having been “children of wrath even as others.” How, then, can he possibly here claim the blessing of being ‘reconciled’ with any other thought than to express the ceasing of that wrath and variance? And to call the world to the same enjoyment was to exercise “the ministry of reconciliation.” Here was the message—“God was, through Christ, reconciling the

world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

"Not imputing their trespasses."—What, then, is this but just to restore the transgressors to His favour? Men, it seems, have trespasses which God might impute to them, and the imputing of which would be to keep the offenders at a distance—out of His favour, and under His judgment. And thus 'not to impute sins' is precisely the same thing as to 'reconcile sinners,' or take them back to His favour. Such is the only meaning of the expressions taken separately, and such is the only possible harmony in their connection. Grammatically considered, it might perhaps be a question whether the 'not imputing of trespasses' be not a *fruit* of the 'reconciling'—thus taking the latter as that spiritual change through which the love of sin is given up for the love of God—the change and consequent result being effected through the wonderful self-sacrifice of the Saviour. Grammatically, I say, and even this would be hard to make out. But exegetically and morally regarded, there is marvellously little room for the question. The entire sense and usage of words is against it. And if, contrary to all that, we can still venture to consider 'reconciliation' as equivalent to a spiritual renewal which gives rise to holy instead of unholy affections, then it is idle to speak of 'not imputing' trespasses; because, *to the extent of such renewal*, there could (I speak for the belief of those who hold the view in question) be no longer any trespasses to impute!

And then the great embassy, "We are ambassadors for Christ;—God beseeching (men) by us, we pray (them) in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God." Such

is Apostolic work—to go through a rebellious world, imploring men to lay down their arms, to repent, believe, and thus be restored to the favour of Him whose favour is life;—that is to say, “be reconciled to God.” And on what ground?—for this, above everything, should remove all ambiguity as to the character of the reconciliation.—“He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Wonderful beyond thought, “high as heaven, deeper than hell!”—“Not imputing their trespasses unto them.”—And how, or why?—*Because, “He hath made Him to be SIN for us, who knew no sin.”* Just take it as it stands—alas that it should ever be taken otherwise!—and does not every attempt to explain this strange dealing on the ground of the Saviour’s human sympathy seem a mockery; while every other form of speech would be tame beside the tremendous energy of the announcement—“HATH MADE HIM TO BE SIN FOR US?” Sympathy! Yes, and the more sympathy with the sinner, the more revulsion from the sin; and therefore the more complete a negation of everything like being “*made sin.*” Just imagine any trace, I do not say of the language, but of the sentiment, ascribed to any one else, as expressive of a perfect sympathy with sinners, in combination with a perfect abhorrence of their sins? No, we cannot imagine it. The thing stands out in absolute contradiction to all laws of thought or language. It is nothing but the Saviour’s unparalleled position in the world that can impart any propriety to the language or reality to the picture. According to that we have Him “dying for all;” and in thus dying for all we have Him “made sin for us.” There is no use for denying it;—these two things are strictly coincident.

It is only in the first of them that the second becomes intelligible. The "made sin" which otherwise in the case of the sinless One would be contradictory in terms, and unimaginable in thought, gets its complete solution in the Scripture idea of the "dying for all." The "not imputing" of sin appears then as a bright stream of blessing flowing from the deep abyss of the grace which *made Him to be sin for us*. And then, finally, we see how perfectly the "making of us (all-guilty) to be the righteousness of God in Him" corresponds to the "making of Him (all-sinless) to be sin for us." It corresponds in this, that the one transaction is as perfect towards *us* as the other was perfect towards *Him*; and in this, that our being thus "made righteousness" no more means our being made holy, than His being "made sin" means His being made unholy. We can see, in short, by the clearest light of heaven, unless we are absolutely determined not to see, what is meant by the atonement of Christ, and the reconciliation of man.

The following sentences from Chrysostom on this passage (Homily as above) are worthy of regard—"And how hath He reconciled it unto Himself? For this is the wonderful thing that He became not a friend only, but a friend in such a way? How? Remitting (*ἀφείδς*) their sins; for otherwise it could not be. Wherefore also he added, "Not imputing their trespasses unto them;" for if He had chosen to require an account of our sins, we should all have *perished*, for all were *dead* . . . Nevertheless He not only did not exact punishment (*ἀπήτησε δίκην*) for our sins, but was reconciled also. He not only pardoned (*ἀφῆκεν*), but did not impute We are ambassadors for Christ, *i.e., instead of* (*ἀντὶ*) Christ, for we have succeeded to His functions

in His stead, and instead of the Father He hath both achieved mighty things, and hath suffered Him that did no wrong to be punished for (κολασθῆναι ὑπὲρ) those who had done wrong.* And yet he did not say this, but something far greater. What, then, is that? *Him that knew no sin*, he says, Him that was righteousness itself, He made sin, *i.e.*, suffered as a sinner, to be condemned (κατακριθῆναι) as one cursed, to die The righteous, saith he, He made a sinner, that He might make the sinners righteous—more than that, made Him *sin*, that we also might be made, not righteous but righteousness, and the righteousness of God. For this is [the righteousness] of God, when we are justified, not by works, (in which case it were necessary that not a spot should be found,) but by grace, in which case all sin is done away If a king beholding a robber and a malefactor under punishment (κολαζόμενον) gave his well-beloved son, his only begotten and true, to be slain; and transferred the death and guilt from him to his son (who was of no such character) that he might both save the condemned man, and clear him of his evil reputation would not that man choose ten thousand deaths rather than outrage such a benefactor?"

Even De Wette could say no less on *v.* 21 than that "Christ was made not a sin-offering, not a sinner, but stronger, in opposition to righteousness,—zur personificirten Sünde, nämlich dadurch dass er die Strafe der Sünde auf ihn legte."

Epistle to the Galatians.—We find here some important statements on our subject. The first that occurs is a very simple one (*i.* 4), and might be supposed

* Thus it seems that this "notion" is older than Pope Innocent III., "in whom Neander thinks that he finds the first open declaration of it."—See Garden, "Tracts for Priests," &c., No. iii.

rather to favour the opposite interpretation—"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world." 'See Him,' it might be said, 'devoting, sacrificing His own will, ease, honour, and life, because of His overpowering desire to rid us from sin's bondage and misery'! True, and we might stop here if we knew nothing more about the matter. But suppose that *we* were going down to death, and that this "giving of Himself" means that He gave Himself to *death*—then what alternative should we have but to believe that *His dying* was designed to be *instead of ours*? So we should, of necessity, take it, if the same thing were written of any other person acting for another party similarly situated. Nor can it in the least degree affect our conclusion that an important moral design is attached to the statement in question. For such a *design* can no more neutralize the *character* of the sacrifice than that can neutralize the *design*. And yet, distinct as this statement is, there is another more remarkable in every way—"Christ hath redeemed us (ἐξήγγόρασεν) from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." (iii. 13.) To be made a curse *for* those who were under a curse, with a view to their redemption from it—this surely means to be made so *in their stead*. If there be any other sense in which one can be said to redeem a dying man by dying for him, or a criminal under the curse by being made a curse for him—I must confess I have not heard of it.

Suffice it, after this, just to note such expressions as these—"He loved me, and gave Himself for me;" He was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." (ii. 20; iv. 4, 5.) Now, unless it be denied that the universal, or moral law is

included in that law of which the Apostle is speaking throughout, there is, it seems, a necessity for our being redeemed even from it, in some important sense. But what is that necessity?—what is that sense, if we be in no respect under a real “curse of the law”? And if we be, then what alternative is there, I again ask, as to the sense in which Christ is said to redeem us, by being “made a *curse for us*”?

Take now the *Epistle to the Ephesians*—combining with it the kindred one to the *Colossians*, and just run through the notices that concern us. We are “made accepted in the Beloved,” it is said—“In whom we have redemption through His blood.” Now there were two great means of redeeming life familiar, under whatever form, to both Jewish and Gentile minds. There was the money-redemption, and the blood-redemption. What the latter of these meant admitted of no more doubt than did the former. What else is it, then, but that well-known redemption that is here spoken of? We hear much of the incapacity of unlearned people to understand the Bible, from their ignorance of the customs and ideas of Bible times and places. But what ignorance can equal the ignoring of everything that antiquity, sacred or profane, knew upon such a subject? Who, in ancient times, ever dreamt of the notion, that to ‘redeem through the blood of another’ meant to make people good through the moral influence, or the divine power of His wonderful self-devotion? And, if it did not mean that in those times, no more can it mean it now. In addition to which, let us particularly notice that this “redemption” has its equivalent in the well-

understood blessing of "the forgiveness of sins." (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.)

And now, in pursuance of the same train of thought, what do we find? We find the Gentiles who were "far from God," who "had no hope, and were without God in the world"—"made nigh by the blood of Christ;" that is, of course, through the blood-redemption which had been spoken of. And we find Jews—who, as compared with them, were not 'far off,' but 'nigh'—described as having been "children of wrath even as others," and as obtaining peace only through the same cross.

But are we not told, it will be said, that already the enmity has been slain by the cross? Yes, but what enmity? Not the enmity of God, for He had none. Not *our* enmity to God, for that is not the subject here; but *the* enmity of which the Apostle has been speaking, namely, "the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile"—"the enmity, even the law of commandments *contained in ordinances*"—"that of *twain* He might make *one* new man, *so making peace*." This enmity the *Son of man*, by His cross, has abolished—providing for the two one common salvation, and preparing them both for one common heaven. As to the reconciliation of God and man, there is nothing taught in these Epistles beyond what we have met with in the preceding ones.

If such, then, be the truth here taught by the Apostle, we have just to read in the light of it all the glorious things which he writes about the "exceeding riches of God's grace," and the "unsearchable riches of Christ." Nor can it ever alter the *character* of the great sacrifice to have it so often pressed upon us as

the *model* for our own life. Thus we are to “walk in love, as Christ has loved us, and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.” There is nothing here, surely, to interfere with the great fact that a burnt-offering, before giving out its sweet savour, had first been “accepted, as making an atonement” for the offerer. And suppose it to be, as we know it is, the great *design* of the Redeemer perfectly to sanctify and glorify His church, that cannot alter the meaning of the grand act of His “*giving Himself for it*”—giving Himself to death for a company which otherwise was to have died—so that now it may not die, but live. (Chap. v. 25–27.) Here, if anywhere, our Lord Jesus appears as a *representative* person—the very *Head* of a body which becomes to Him, as it were, a second self. And yet that does not hinder (why should any one assume that it does?) His being, in the first instance, a substitute for the party which becomes His body. Even a man might give his own life in the place of his bride’s; and how, in case of necessity, could he do otherwise, if he only knew that after giving it away he should take it again? Thus it is no incredible thing that, while the first Adam was only the representative of his family, the Second may be both a representative and substitute for His. Observe, moreover, that—while, in “*giving Himself for the church*,” He really gave His *blood to redeem* it—the “*sanctifying and cleansing*,” on the other hand, comes through “the washing of water by the *word*.” As He Himself said, “Now ye are *clean* through the *word* which I have spoken unto you.” This distinction, I know, may be counted subtle; enough for us if it be Scriptural.

And, once more, if we want an illustration of our own 'forgiveness,' we shall find it in the exhortation to "forgive one another, if any man have a quarrel against any—even as God, through Christ, hath forgiven us." (Eph. iv. 32; Col. iii. 13.) Now the *meaning* of our forgiving our neighbour is not certainly to *make him good* (however it ought to influence him to that), but to refrain from pursuing him with the consequence of his offences. And, if such be our forgiveness, then such, it seems, is God's also. Thus it is that we are represented as being "forgiven all trespasses"—Christ Himself having "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." (Col. ii. 13, 14.) It is not needful to decide how far this "handwriting of ordinances" should be regarded as extending—whether merely to the *national*, or to the *universal* requirements of the divine law. But, anyhow, we have for our instruction the figure of a bond as taken up, and discharged by one on behalf of another, and which is therefore no longer in the creditor's power for a prosecution, but now, as a cancelled thing, has been nailed up to the chief pillar in his own house by the friend who so generously discharged it. And thus, says the Apostle, were his fellow believers "forgiven all trespasses."

In writing to the *Thessalonians*, the Apostle reminds them how they had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." And this, according to the view we are opposing, should have ensured acceptance and forgiveness; for of itself it would have constituted reconciliation. It is another view, however, that is sug-

gested by what follows—without pressing it beyond its strict sense and bearing—“To wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus our *Deliverer from the wrath to come.*” One thing, certainly, appears here, and that is, that this Apostle was more accustomed to think of ‘wrath’ and ‘deliverance from it’ than some are now;—as he says again, “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, *who died for us.*” It does seem as if this dying were somehow God’s direct means of saving us from a very real wrath—and no the less, surely, because of the gracious *design* of the *dying* Saviour, “that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.” (1 Thess. i. 9, 10; v. 9, 10.)

We come now to the most direct of all the Apostolic testimonies, and therefore the one which should require the least of our expounding—“There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a RANSOM FOR ALL,” ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων. (1 Tim. ii. 6.) *

Now we know too well how this, like the sayings of other dead witnesses, can be put on the rack, till it shall mean whatever the inquisitor pleases. We understand how, by a skilful use of the art of shifting and paraphrasing, anything can come to appear just the contrary of itself. We know how an old revealed truth can be written over with a supposed new revelation—and thus the old cancelled by the new, like the divine directions

* Chrysostom says in his homily on the passage, “A ransom—what is that? He was about to punish (τιμωρεῖσθαι) them. He did not do it. They were about to perish (ἀπόλλυσθαι); but instead of them (ἀντ’ ἐκείνων) He gave His own Son, and sent us as heralds to herald the cross.”

to the prophet from Judah by the fabrication of the one in Bethel. But what, I now ask, did Paul intend, and what did Timothy understand by these words? Paul, who had been brought up on the soil of the ancient world, and all his life had breathed the very atmosphere of the Old Testament—and Timothy, who “from a child, had known those Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation”—how did they regard such words? Say, if you will, that the thing is absurd and impossible—yet, as for the words, what sense but one could these men attach to them? For my part, I am content to understand them as the writer and the first reader of them did—believing that I have in them a revelation from God as clear and true, and good now as it ever was. But accept them or not—what did they mean to those men? And can we doubt what that was any more than we can doubt how the same men would understand such words as these—“If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the *ransom of his life* (*copher*, λύτρα τῆς ψυχῆς) whatsoever is laid upon him.” (Exod. xxi. 30.) Or, “ye shall take no *satisfaction* (ransom, *copher*, λύτρα) for the life of a murderer, but he shall surely be put to death.” (Num. xxxv. 31.) Or, those other words, as describing *compensation*, first in the way of *ransom*, and then of *penalty*—“Keep this man: if, by any means, he be missing, then shall *thy life be for his life*, else thou shalt pay a *talent of silver* . . . Thus saith the Lord, because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore *thy life shall go for* (ἀντὶ) *his life*, and thy people *for* (ἀντὶ) *his people*.” (1 Kings xx. 39.)*

* Compare similar language in 2 Kings x. 24—“If any of the men escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him” (ψυχὴ ἀντὶ ψυχῆς).

Or how, in a word—considering what we have just seen of the connection of the Hebrew and Greek expressions—how could the Apostle and the Evangelist have understood the words in question otherwise than as setting forth that great substance which had now appeared, as the counterpart to all the shadows which had sprung out of the arrangement—"I have given it to you upon the altar to atone for your souls: for the blood atoneth *through* the soul"? (Lev. xvii. 11.)

One passage more will suffice; and it is one of those which have been regarded as so unfavourable to our view—"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." (Titus ii. 14.) See, then, the connection. The gospel has brought to us "the hope of *eternal life*." (i. 2.) Need I say that it must be of essential moment to regard *that* as the Apostle himself did? Again, "The grace of God, bringing salvation to all men, hath appeared" (ii. 11); and one of the great facts of that appearing is, that "our Saviour Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity"—that is to say, *gave Himself to death for us who otherwise must have died*. Such is the great fact announced, and what does it mean? Or, take by itself the expression, "To redeem from all iniquity." Now, if iniquity (or contrariety to the divine law) is represented in Scripture as having any penal consequences, then, surely, such a redemption implies deliverance from these. What these are is here assumed. Enough, for the present, that He gave Himself to death *for those who were doomed to die*. Is it necessary to repeat that the ultimate *design* of the sacrifice can never do away with its own essential *character*?

CHAPTER XV.

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY—(CONTINUED).

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

“WHEN He had by Himself made a purgation of our sins.” (i. 3.) A magnificent announcement truly, and easily enlisted into the service of a universal purification—legal, moral, practical—of the human family. And so much the more, when the immediately preceding words are taken into account—“Whom He hath appointed Heir of all things.” Yes, but such a view, agreeable though it be, and apparently as honourable to God as happy for man, cannot be arrived at without the use of certain means from which it becomes us to shrink. Thus there is the entire scope of the epistle as regards sacrifice, and the selection which that imposes upon us as to the unquestionably varying senses of the term ‘purgation’* of sin. There is the addition of the great words “*through Himself*,” as distinguishing this sacrifice from all others by which atonement had ever been made. Then there is the ignoring of the fact that this epistle, more strongly perhaps than any

* Thus καθάριζω is used in Sept. for various words which express ‘atonement’ in the very strictest sense: *e.g.* for קָרַט (Job i. 5.) which plainly points to *expiation*; for חָטָא (Exod. xxix. 36; Lev. viii. 15; ix. 15) to *offer sin-offering*; and for כָּפַר (Exod. xxix. 37; xxx. 10; cf. Deut. xxxii. 43; Isaiah vi. 7) to *cover over, atone for*. So καθάρισμός is used for כַּפְרִים (Exod. xxix. 36) *atonements*; and for אֲשָׁם (Prov. xiv. 9) *trespass-offering*.

other, is opposed to the belief of a universal restoration.* True, He is "Heir of all things." But, like any other heir in coming to his estate, he may have to burn up any quantity of "thorns and briers." (vi. 8.) Like the heir of any other throne, He may have to destroy whatever number of presumptuous rebels. (x. 26-31.) Perfect Son though He be, at once of God and of man, He may, as the Psalm proving it indicates, have much to do in the "breaking with a rod of iron, and dashing in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalm ii. 9.) Yes, even though He be the Creator of all things, that does not guarantee the permanence of His very grandest works—"Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment." (vv. 10, 11.) So hazardous is it to take up a word, and hug it to our bosom, while all the time we are flying in the face of Him that spoke it.

The next chapter stands pre-eminent in the Apostolic writings for a glowing view of our Lord's incarnation, suffering, victory, dominion—as all in the most entire sympathy and oneness with His brethren. Is this designed, then, in a future, nearer or further off, but still in the course of time—to serve as a universal salve for the wounds of humanity, however men may live now? Nay, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (ii. 3.) We might expect here, if anywhere, to find our Lord taking into His bosom *men*, without exception, as His brethren. And yet it is not so. For He plainly

* Chap. ii. 2; iii. 11, 18, 19; iv. 1, 3, 5, 11; vi. 4-8; x. 26-31, 38, 39; xii. 14-17, 29.

speaks of His "brethren" as "the *Church*," or company *gathered out* from the world of men. (verse 12.) We might expect, here at least, some token of the Redeemer's identifying Himself with entire humanity, and so presenting it to God in essential oneness with Himself, as to leave nothing behind, save only a harmless question regarding the time and mode of the actual inbringing of the various scattered units. And yet it is not so. For the very design of the Universal Sovereign, in thus giving His Son to be a man for men, was the "bringing of *many sons* unto glory." (verse 10.) The 'many' *might* of course mean 'all,' as in contrast to 'one.' But here there is no such contrast. It is 'many,' as in relation to 'the whole'—a church *called out* in relation to the world *from which*—"children given," as God's henceforth, in relation to all who were merely Adam's; the many, in short, who *receive*, in contrast with the many who "*neglect*, so great salvation."

At the same time it would be unfair to make, as in favour of a distinct 'atonement,' too much of the expression, "taste death for every man;" nor shall we insist upon the words—"both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified"—even if it were allowed that they mean what we suppose them to do. But there is one clause in the passage about which there should be no uncertainty—"to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." For here we have the expression which above all in the Old Testament meant to 'atone for'—the one which, in fact, formed the ordinary equivalent for the very significant term—to 'cover' or 'cover over' sin. So that, whatever that expression suggested to the mind of a Hebrew with the books of Moses before him, it certainly could not suggest less as he read an

epistle which from first to last had been baptized in the language of those books.*

Passing by a number of references to our subject, we cannot overlook the one in vii. 27—"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." 'Now, here,' we may be told, 'is the very view of Christ and His offering, which we are rejecting, set forth as the true one. Here is the priest in Israel, especially the high priest, acting as the *representative*, not the *substitute* of the people. When *he* offers, *they* offer. When God accepts *him*, He accepts *them*. Such is the relationship; what can be more beautiful? And such also is Christ; what can be more satisfactory?'—Beautiful, I allow, and satisfactory too, so far as it goes. But it is just one of those half-truths that make up a grievous error. The high priest was, indeed, the representative of Israel, not the substitute. And, as their representative, he offered for them, and was accepted on their behalf. But *what* did he offer? He offered, first, that sacrifice which served as a substitute for his own life—and then that which served the same purpose for the people. The high priest was not a sin-offering. Jesus was. And thus there met in Him both representative and substitute. *He* offered up *Himself*. But how could He be both? The question is perhaps a weaker one than will be put; in which case there will be no call for the answer, which simply is—'*Because He was what He*

* The simple form ἱλασκομαι occurs but seldom in the Septuagint. But, taking as its equivalent the compound with ἐκ, the word occurs sixty-four times there as the representative of כפר.

was.' Suppose, on the other hand, that, the people being guilty, the high priest had been innocent, and that he, a sinless man, had given himself to death, that they, sinful, might not die. Then, whatever there might in such a case be of the *representative*, there can be no question how much there would be of the *substitute*.

Chap. ix. 7-9. Just notice one point, as expressly stated in each of these verses.

(1) The high priest went once every year into the holiest of all with *blood*, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.

(2) It was thus signified that the way of a free access to God was not yet made manifest.

(3) Such service could not make the worshipper perfect in respect to his conscience.

Thus the sacrificial blood was offered—not as the symbol of the offerer's own life, but *for his sins*. It was, as it were, a constant attempt to put them away—a constant attempt to get into the presence of God, in spite of the obstacles which they presented—a constant attempt at the satisfying of conscience as defiled by them. Is this, I ask, the teaching of the passage? And is it of any importance in our argument?

A contrast to this—verses 11, 12. "But Christ having come . . . neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." That is to say—while the one blood was no sufficient offering for sin, the other blood was;—while the one blood could not bring into the presence of God, the other blood has done it;—while the one could not meet the demands

of the worshipper's conscience, the other has procured 'eternal redemption.' Now it may be quite possible to adapt these ideas to one or another of the conflicting views of the atoning work. But, putting aside any verbal adjustment, it should be every one's care to see whether his system is, or is not, in a real, natural, living harmony with the Apostolic doctrine.

The old and the new compared. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (vv. 13, 14.) There was one thing that the legal shadows could do. They could procure, in the way of shadow like themselves, a legal cleansing. The blood of bulls and of goats had in it what was at once a real life of its own kind, and the shadow of a higher life; the ashes of the heifer, as showing how completely the living form had gone back to dust, was the most significant of all those typical exhibitions of the real taking away of life; so that the transgressor getting the benefit of the bloodshedding, and any one who had touched the dead having the heifer-ashes water sprinkled upon him as a water of *purification* (the Hebrew says *sin-offering*)—there was thus effected a real, though superficial, cleansing—or, as it is called, a "purifying of the flesh." The outward evil, in a word, was put away by the outward appliance. Whatever of a legal doom the offender had contracted had been executed in the shedding of the blood, or in the burning up of the heifer. Such is the Mosaic circumstance; and now for

the Christian counterpart. Here is a soul, troubled not with any ceremonial failures, or ordinary errors—not even with the social or religious death attaching to the misfortune of having touched the dead—but with a load of real “dead works”—works, sacred or secular, as may be, but with no love, no holiness, and therefore no life in them—works not “wrought in God,” not done for God. This is the case to be met now. And how shall that be? Put away the dead works, and begin at once to “serve the living God”—will that do? That might be nature’s way, and reason’s way; but it is not the gospel way. It is only at the best a way which, like the old legal one, will never “perfect the worshipper as concerning the conscience”—and will never really bring forth the living service that is wanted. The Christian road has its beginning at the other end—“How much more shall the blood of Christ”—the sin-covering blood of Christ—that blood which has in it no mere animal life, however innocent and wonderful, but the whole of that virtue and value, exceeding all measure and all thought, which the *person* of the God-man could impart to His shed blood—“How much more shall the blood” of such a One, and so shed, answer for you! It is the blood of Him who, under the moving of that eternal Spirit that had moved Him in everything, offered HIMSELF without spot to God—and who, in the furnace of His agony, underwent a dissolution much akin to that of the burnt-up heifer.* How fit, then, such blood to clear you from every charge at the bar of God—how fit to purge and pacify your own accusing conscience—how fit to bring you into the presence of the Holy One, though as far off as any Pharisee, any heathen, any

* See Ps. xxii. 15.

atheist—so that you may now begin in right earnest, and in childlike love, “to serve the LIVING GOD!”

The succeeding paragraph (15–17) is too important to be passed over, and too difficult to be discussed here; it is, therefore, left for separate treatment at the end of this chapter.

In regard to the next portion (18–22) what has been said above (chap. viii.) need not be repeated. But the following view of it is worthy of notice:—“Here the death of certain victims, the blood which is shed when they are slain, is made the pledge and assurance that God has taken them to be His servants. This is their consecration; by this they are sealed, redeemed, devoted to Him.”* This, as usual, is said with much confidence. But is it really clear that the taking away of animal life, by means of blood-shedding, represents the consecration and acceptance of rational beings? Is the notorious fact of *death* to go for nothing, on the one hand; or, on the other, to represent an idea nowhere associated with it, and extremely foreign to the Old Testament—namely, a death to self from which true life springs? And again, when told that “by this they were redeemed,” we cannot but ask, Redeemed from what? For, if ‘redeemed’ at all, it is plainly *from some evil, by the giving up of life on their behalf*. Such is the unquestionable fact. What does it involve?

Suffice it now to call attention to the closing verse of the passage—“Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” It would be superfluous to contend here for the view of this last sentence that has so long prevailed

* Maurice, “Doctrine of Sacrifice,” p. 168.

among Christians. It has generally been regarded by them as a very distinct statement of the doctrine of vicarious sin-bearing, in order to forgiveness. We are now told that we have been greatly mistaken—seeing that blood-shedding is, under one form or other, the symbol of a spiritual consecration to God, and expresses no kind of penal death as undergone by one in the room of another. It is hard in such a case to ask questions. For one party has no need of them, and the other is not likely to profit by them. And yet it is also hard not to ask—What, then, was implied of consecration or dedication in the sprinkling of the blood? Had that ever been aught but entirely sacred and holy? Or was it the blood or life of the victim typically, and of the people really, which in that case was offered to God? And what was meant by the addition to the blood of water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, as if to add to its *purifying* power? And what was designed by the sprinkling of the tabernacle, and its vessels, and “almost all things” under the law? What could possibly be the meaning of all this—if, indeed, it had a reasonable and divine meaning, apart from form and superstition—what but the one actually assigned, “Because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins”—“in the midst of which” these things were? That is to say, the whole place was regarded as polluted, the very atmosphere infected, by the presence of guilty man. His sins had streamed from him in every direction—had settled down upon every object around—and so everything had to be purged (about consecrating there was no question now)—and with blood too—yes, atoned for, covered over—that was the purging. “And without

shedding of blood there takes place no remission." Simple minds—and minds can be simple without being weak—may find it profitable to ponder this sacred statement.

The passage which follows (*vv.* 23–28) is one of the noblest and tenderest in the Scriptures, and demands from us a very devout and honest treatment. Let me, in a few sentences, set down what would be the substance of the two different styles of exposition that we are considering.

The one that has generally prevailed in the church would connect and insist upon such points as these.

(1) Christ has gone into heaven with, or in virtue of, the blood which He shed. (2) This blood He shed for our sins. (3) That we might have remission of sins. (4) By the one sacrifice of Himself He has put away sin. (5) All men have to die once; which cannot be taken as less than a *part* of the penalty which sin has brought upon them—and as a *sample of the entire death* which is their due. (6) Christ in thus shedding His blood—for the remission of our sins—which, by the one sacrifice of Himself, He has thus put away—Christ, in thus dying, on behalf of those to whom personally death is due, is said to have been "once offered to bear (bear away, lift up) the sins of many."

Such are the simple facts of the passage. I now offer, *first*, an explanation in regard to (6). It is this—'To bear the sin of another' means in the Old Testament, and therefore here, neither more nor less than to incur the liability of the other in regard to penalty. Thus (*Lev.* xix. 17, according to the Sept. and English margin, and no doubt correctly as in *Num.* xviii. 32),

"Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not bear sin for him." And this is only a specimen (see p. 118 above) of the unvarying usage in all the passages that could be adduced in the present case. *Secondly*, I ask a question—If this be the meaning of *bearing sin*—and if Christ, in so bearing our sin, came to die for us—is it possible to regard this as less than bearing sin *instead* of us, and dying *instead* of us?

Let me just say here, in answer to the oft-repeated objection of our still dying, notwithstanding Christ's having died for us—that the death which believers now die is a very minute part of that entire death which He died to save us from; that it lasts but for a short time, and then is swallowed up in victory; and that, at the very worst, the death is taken out of the death. For "if a man keep My saying, he shall never see death;" "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." (John viii. 51; xi. 26.)

And now for the other view of the passage. We admit, it might be said, the facts of the case, but we differ from you in the explanation of them. We consider that when Christ shed His blood, or gave up His life, His design was to make the most complete surrender and sacrifice of His own will to the will of God. And this He did as the most perfect means of conquering the self-will, that is, the sin of man—thus putting it away, and so obtaining remission for the sinner. In all this He was acting as our Head and Representative—presenting to His Father a perfect self-surrender in the name of mankind, and thus gaining for mankind a perfect acceptance in His name. Thus men can now know themselves to be acceptable to God;

thus they can come, as in union among themselves, and in union with God—even in the very person of the God-man. And this is how He “was once offered to bear the sins of many.” As to any assumed liability for them, or any subjection to penalty in the room of us the transgressors—we reject the thought as at once dishonourable to God, and pernicious to man.

On this I remark—that what is expressed in this statement is not in the passage; and what is in the passage is not expressed in the statement. Thus there is in it no expression answering to the shedding or sprinkling of blood in the Old Testament—nothing answering to the bearing, or remitting of sins, whether in the Old or New, or anywhere. There is nothing to bring out the character of the *one perfect* offering in relation to the many imperfect ones. There is nothing to show how the standing of our High Priest before God is the full realization of all that seemed to be aimed at or attempted in the person of Israel’s high priest. There is, in short, an utter incongruity between the type and the alleged antitype in respect to these last points. For the Jewish high priest did in no sense, however shadowy or symbolical, *present himself to God for the people*. In no sense was he accepted for them, or they in him. He did something which did answer this end; but that is a thing altogether ignored, or rather denied, by those on the other side; and yet that was the very thing which was (symbolically of course) accepted for Israel—and Israel in it. He, as the representative, presented the sin-offering with its vicarious sin-covering blood. And thus the union of priest and sacrifice did furnish that shadow or symbol which has obtained in our High Priest all the development and

realization which the mind, the heart, or the conscience of man can suppose, desire, or enjoy.

Chapter x. 1-18.—Here we find repetition and enlargement of the previous views of sin and sacrifice. We learn again that the aim of the blood-sacrifice was the purging, or putting away, of sin—while yet its inadequacy for the end in view always left a “conscience of sin” behind—“bringing it to remembrance again every year.” (2-4, 11.) Now what these sacrifices were always aiming, striving, pointing at—but without the possibility of reaching—that Christ, by His one blood-shedding, has done. For by this “He has offered one sacrifice for sins for ever.” “By one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified;” that is to say, has *cleansed* them in the way always contemplated, but never accomplished, by the ancient offerings. His offering, in short, has had a result so thorough as to supersede all other offerings for the remission of sin. (12, 14, 18.)

It is superfluous to repeat what has been said already on these points. There is just one thing in this passage peculiarly demanding attention, and that is the quotation from the Psalm—“Lo I come to do thy will, O God.” (verse 7.) Put the whole together, then. See what has preceded and what follows; see how the Apostle explains this will of God, and the doing of it, and its result; and then say what is really meant by the will and the fulfilment. Can any thing be plainer than that the will here spoken of means just the offering of that one sacrifice which was to substantiate and realize all the foregoing ones—accomplishing in perfection that which they could only advertize as being

needed, while so remarkably foreshadowing its appearance? Could any one have imagined the Apostle by this "doing the will of God" to mean "the perfect love of God and man"?* And yet this is the way in which the matter is explained by one of those who are counted worthy to lead the religious thought of the age. "The writer of the Epistle" (we find another saying) "approaches by orderly stages to the great subject, and by the time he comes to the tenth chapter, he is ready to teach what sacrifice is. He employs the Old Testament language to do so, and quotes a passage in which it is testified that in the mere outward phenomena of sacrifice God could have no pleasure—that the *only thing pleasing to Him must be 'doing His will'*—gladly becoming God's slave, and giving up to Him the spirit of a man in the body of a man. He declares that this is what the Son of God did. He put aside the traditional forms of sacrifice, and revealed its essence. Jesus Christ offered up His body once to the will of God, and by that act we are sanctified."† And again, "Sacrifice is the communion of the creature made in the image of God with his Maker."

And such is the utmost of the assistance that they give us who inveigh so earnestly against all that is merely traditional and conventional, inviting us to exchange for reason and reality that unhappy style of catching at mere sound and semblance which has been only too common among those who have been known as 'evangelical.' Alas for humanity if it consents, under the soothing influence of such teaching, thus to keep

* Dr. Campbell, "Atonement," p. 135.

† J. Ll. Davies, "Remarks on Jowett's Commentary on St. Paul," p. 72.

its eyes shut before an open Bible! For what says the Bible about the "will of God" which the Redeemer came to do? Had not that will appointed the old sacrifices, as we have just seen, with the very design of bringing sin before the worshippers, and pointing out by what kind of means it was to be put away? And now, after so long a display of the inherent inefficacy of such means, had not that will called forth the Incarnate Son for the complete effecting of the mighty work? "A body hast Thou prepared me." Surely, it is *the putting away of sin*, and that alone, which is now the subject of concern to that will—the putting of it away in the sense of 'remission,' so that the forgiven soul should "have no more conscience of it."

The old sacrifices were all right, and perfect too. But it was in the way of being shadows. They rightly pointed out the want; they perfectly typified the character of the supply. But, for the actually supplying of the want, they could do nothing. That the Redeemer came to do. The offering of His body was not another sort of sacrifice from what had all along been presented. It was simply a substantial instead of a shadowy sacrifice—an effectual instead of an ineffectual—a divinely perfect instead of a carnally imperfect—a constantly enduring instead of a constantly changing one. "Then said He, Lo, I come to do thy will—He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will" (the will not "that God and man should be loved," and every kind of duty and good thing done—but the will that Christ should offer Himself for our sins—yes, by this will) "we are sanctified, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that

are sanctified . . . having offered one sacrifice for sins for ever." Is it not, then, an extraordinary liberty, after such a characterizing of this will, to speak of it as so many are now venturing to do?

In regard to the expression "sanctified," here employed, a little explanation may be important. Now, clearly it is just the realization of that which appeared only as a shadow under the old dispensation—namely, that cleansing or purging of sin of which, and of which alone, the Apostle has been treating throughout. Nothing can well be plainer than that such is the sense of the expressions 'sanctify' and 'cleanse' in the books of Moses. And, in fact, both those expressions (*ἀγιάζω* and *καθαρίζω*) are used for the important 'atone' or 'cover over' of the Hebrew, as well as to express ideas that are manifestly equivalent.* It is certainly thus that the word (*ἀγιάζω*) is used in this Epistle (ix. 13), where the blood of bulls and goats is said to sanctify—that is, to cleanse, in the way that Moses calls 'atoning for.' Why, then, should we not take it thus in the present passage, where it cannot refer to that inward work which we commonly call 'sanctification'—"By the which will we *have been* sanctified"—that is to say, purged from sin, in the sense of full remission, or perfectly *atoned for*. And so, "by one offering, He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

* See chapter i. 3 above on *καθαρίζω*. So *ἀγιάζω* is used for כָּפַר, to atone for. (Exodus xxix. 33, 36.) In the former of these verses the expression is closely allied with that in verse 10 ("by the which will we are sanctified"), and precisely the same as in verse 29 of this chapter. Thus, Exodus xxix. 33, They shall eat those things *whereby they were atoned for*, ἐν οἷς ἡγιάσθησαν; Heb. x. 29, The blood of the covenant *whereby he was atoned for*, ἐν ᾧ ἡγιάσθη. To the same purpose ἁγιασμός (or, ἁγνισμός) is used for sin-offering in Num. viii. 7.

Verses 19-25.—Here we see that our means or right of entrance “into the holiest” is by the blood of Jesus—just as the high priest, by the blood of the sin-offering, passed within the veil. We see that we can now have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience; and when we remember the ancient usage in regard to blood, it cannot be a question whether this sprinkling of our conscience comes by that means or not. It is important also to observe how the Apostle keeps the two things distinct—the sprinkling of the conscience with the shed blood, and the washing of the body with pure water.

Verses 26-31.—Here is a trumpet-blast of very terrible warning, with some important lessons for us. “If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” Surely this Apostle believed, if he believed anything, that the sacrifice of Christ was God’s means for the pardoning of sin, and the putting away of judgment—in the contemptuous rejection of which, as described by him, there remained nothing but judgment, indignation, destruction. If, as he suggests, there were some other sacrifice for sins after that of Christ, then possibly those consequences might be averted. But there is none, and therefore they are inevitable. The presumptuous despiser of the law of Moses died without mercy. How much more grievous must be the punishment of him “who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, [wherewith atonement was made for him*] an unholy

* See note on previous page.

thing." I leave it to appear whether this be not a very different view of the meaning and design of Christ's sacrifice from that which is now so studiously pressed upon us; and I ask whether the subsequent words in regard to retribution can be reconciled with those views which strip the great Judge of all terrors, and leave Him nothing but a fatherly tenderness which would be simply the exaggeration of one very beautiful phase of humanity, but not in harmony with the Scriptural delineation of the Most High—"Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"? Did the writer of this portion—the writer of this Epistle—believe in the accomplished redemption and assured restoration of the entire human family?

Chap. xi. 19. "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure (parable)." Now, without dogmatizing here, it cannot be wrong to ask at least a question. Abraham received Isaac from the dead, through the sacrifice of the ram "in the stead of his son." (Gen. xxii. 13.) When the Apostle speaks of this as a parable, does he mean a parable of the way by which we are delivered from death?

Ch. xii. 24. "The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." A suggestion again. The blood of Abel could only cry for vengeance, without putting away sin. The blood of Christ also cried, in its own way, for vengeance; but it did more and better—it cried for pardon and peace; and as the blood of *sprinkling* it signified this to be its aim.

Verse 29. "For our God is a consuming fire." They

are the words of Moses—words spoken in the midst of pictures of destruction as complete as can be imagined. (See Deut. iv. 3, 24, 26.) Let any one just calmly read the first nine chapters of that book, and then say whether the solemn sentence now before us is capable of two meanings or not—capable of being applied to the love of God—unless we regard it as love to destroy the wicked. What, then, did Moses mean in speaking the words? And what does the Apostle mean in applying them? Does it seem that the sentiments so popular about the fatherhood of God are scriptural or not? Is the universal restoration so warmly preached an Apostolical doctrine or not?*

Chap. xiii. 11, 12. "The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate."

Here we have (1) a distinct account of the highest order of sin-offering; and Christ expressly represented in that light. (2) As the blood of the sin-offering was brought into the sanctuary for sin—to "atone for it, that it might be forgiven" (Lev. iv. 20, 26)—so Jesus is said to "*sanctify* the people with His own blood."

* "But at last, O God, wilt Thou not cast death and hell into the lake of fire—even into Thine own consuming self?"—See on Heb. xii. 29, in "Unspoken Sermons," by G. Macdonald, p. 48. To the same purpose—"They say, O God, that we are to tell sinners of the unquenchable fire Thou art reserving for them, when they shall dwell no longer upon the earth. But is not Thy fire about us now? If Thy everlasting Spirit is in Thy church, does not the everlasting fire come with it? Could Thy church live if this fire were extinguished?" "Meditations and Prayers" in Bishop Ewing's "Present Day Papers."

And what, in such a connection, can 'sanctify' mean, but just what the connection requires, and the usage sanctions—to atone for?

After all this abundant reference to sacrifice under one view, we are now brought to another kind of reference which we must not overlook—"By Him therefore let us offer the *sacrifice* of praise to God continually. To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased." (vv. 15, 16.) These words may be taken as a sufficient sample of the various passages in which a similar idea is presented. Now it could hardly have been thought that such passages would be adduced as unfavourable to the ordinary view of atonement. But so it is. "Had punishment been the governing idea of sacrifice," it has been said, "could it have happened that nearly every expansion of the term, from the limits of a material rite, should be expressive of the notion of gift to God, not at all of penalty borne at the hands of God—the sacrifice of praise, the sacrifice of thanksgiving, sacrifice of righteousness, spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God?"*

It would be difficult, I think, to argue more aside from the mark than is here done. Who says that punishment is the *governing* idea of *sacrifice*? That sacrifice is an offering to God we hold as distinctly as the writer of these words. We know that the altar was "God's table," and the sacrifice "God's bread." Every sacrifice was designed to *yield satisfaction* to Him. But surely it is not presumptuous to think that there may be different sorts of sacrifices or offerings to

* Rev. F. Garden, "Tracts for Priests and People." No. III. p. 16.

God—and a satisfaction rendered to Him, differing in kind according to the special character of each, and its fitness for rendering this or that kind of satisfaction. Whatever it be, in fact, that God demands of us, the sacrifice which expresses our surrender to that demand will yield the peculiar satisfaction which He looks for in that particular respect. Thus if He demands the sinner's life, in pursuance of the penalty of His law, the blood of the atoning sacrifice—especially of a sin-offering—will furnish all the satisfaction which the case admits of in that regard. If, on the other hand, He comes seeking the gratitude of a creature already pardoned and accepted, then the thank-offering will be the thing appropriate there. And thus punishment, instead of being “the governing idea of sacrifice,” according to our doctrine, simply comes in where it meets the requirements of the case. In all other respects, our view leaves just as much room as the contrary one for the application of the term to the offering of praise or of service. As to the mere word in question (*θυσία*), and its use among the Jews, it is worthy of notice that its regular application in the Septuagint is not at all to any of the atoning sacrifices, but to meat-offering, and thank-offering.* Thus it would be the most natural thing possible for a Jew to speak of the sacrifice of ‘praise’ or of ‘righteousness.’ We can only express surprise that such a circumstance should ever have been brought up against us.

But, if our view is thus entirely free from the difficulty alleged, there are, I think, two difficulties of a

* Thus in the Septuagint version of Lev. i. the word occurs only three times, but in chap. ii., speaking of meat-offering, seventeen times.

similar sort, from which it will not be so easy to clear the opposite view. (1) If the sacrifice of Christ be what is supposed by that view, how throughout the whole of this epistle is *it* never associated with any of the legal sacrifices, except only the atoning ones? How is *it* never spoken of as a meat-offering, or a thank-offering—a sacrifice of praise, or of righteousness? How again, in all the New Testament, is there no such language? And how does it happen that, in the Old Testament, the only special sacrifice mentioned in connection with the predicted Saviour is the *trespass-offering*? (Isa. liii. 10.) Once, indeed, we find a reference to peace-offering, but that is when His suffering is over, and “the meek” are called to come and feast upon the fruit of it. (Psalm xxii. 25, 26.) And if we be reminded that “He loved us, and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour”—our answer is that that is exactly the character of the burnt-offering—which first furnished an atonement for the offerer, and then, in token of its agreeableness to God, went up in its own flame with the “odour of a sweet smell.”*

And (2) as Christ’s offering of Himself is never presented to us under the aspect of an unbloody sacrifice, so neither is ours under that of a bloody one. We are never spoken of as shedding our blood, or giving up our life, in the way of an atoning sacrifice. And yet,

* I can cordially agree here with the remark in the “Speaker’s Commentary” (Intro. to Lev. § xv.)—“There is certainly no countenance to be found in the Scriptures for the notion of De Maistre, and other more recent writers, that the fire of the altar symbolized retribution for sin.” Most certainly not; that had been already effected by the blood-shedding; and could never be represented by the burning up of lifeless flesh.

according to the modern view, nothing would be more appropriate. We, whose offering of ourselves is entirely disconnected with atonement, are spoken of only as "a living sacrifice." Christ, whose offering is just our atonement is ever represented as a dying sacrifice. An Apostle, as we have seen, when he gives utterance to the idea of himself being 'poured out,' takes care to represent the pouring, as not of blood, but of wine. (Phil. ii. 17.) The Saviour, on the other hand, pours out nothing but atoning, redeeming blood. Such is the constant, well-marked distinction. And how is it to be accounted for except, first, by a corresponding distinction between the different kinds of sacrifice—and then a similar distinction betwixt the Saviour's dying work, and His people's living work?

NOTE ON HEBREWS ix. 15-17.

After a very distinct statement in regard to the atoning blood of the Redeemer, the Apostle adds, "And for this cause He is Mediator of a new *covenant*." (v. 15.) That *διαθήκη* should be taken for *covenant*, not *testament*, throughout the passage seems clear for these reasons—

(1) Not once elsewhere in the whole Scripture is it used for *testament*. (2) In this very passage the word must, as in chap. viii., mean 'covenant,' viz., in verses 15, 20—while the "first" in verse 18 must be the same "first" as in verse 1. And after this to plead that the meaning is abruptly left in verses 16, 17, and then as abruptly returned to, is arbitrary in the extreme. (3) A 'testament' has no *Mediator*. (4) It has nothing to do with *blood*—that is to say, *atoning death*—in order to the pardon of sin, according to the design ascribed to the death spoken of in verse 15; while it is very hard to believe that he speaks of *any other sort of death* in verse 16. (5) Besides the *introduction* to

the paragraph (vv. 15-17) 'for this cause'—connecting it with verse 14, there is the marked connection with the succeeding paragraph as indicated by 'whence' (ὅθεν), *i.e.*, in consequence of the principles just stated—the same paragraph ending thus, "Without blood-shedding is no remission."

In regard to ὁ διαθεμένος (vv. 16, 17), how can it be taken otherwise than as the same verb is used in chap. viii. 10 (this is the covenant which I will covenant—*i.e.*, *make, establish*)? And so it simply expresses the *covenanter, or covenanting party*.

As for the expression ἐπὶ νεκροῖς, the natural meaning would be—'*In regard to objects dead,*' or '*with a view to them.*' That is to say, the security spoken of, and implied in βεβαία, *depends upon them*. These *objects* must, of course, be such as the context suggests; and what is that but '*sacrifices*'? It is enough for the present purpose that sacrifices, whether in type or antitype, *were objects of such a nature*. If so, then they may well be presented under this aspect. While, throughout the context, there is no reason against, but much reason for, such a view of the language. The meaning is thus (in perfect accordance with the usage of ἐπὶ), 'A covenant gets its force *through* objects in a state of death.' And in a connection where there is so much in regard to sacrificial objects as dead, this view may compete advantageously with the one which the idea of 'testament' would require, namely, 'in consequence of men being dead.' Such a meaning may not be absolutely *inadmissible*; but surely it is much more natural to suppose the writer to take the *objects* of which he *had just been speaking*, *viz.*, goats, bulls, calves, heifer, and then Christ Himself,—the objects in *consequence* of whose death the covenant, Old or New, did in *reality* get its force—to take these, and, by a preposition signifying '*in consequence of,*' to express the fact of *covenant-security as coming through these*.

TRANSLATION.

15. "And on this account [with a view to the great truth expressed in verse 14] He is Mediator of a new covenant, in order that death having taken place [*i.e.* the death of the Mediator—all other sacrificial death being absorbed in this], for redemption from the transgressions which were under the first covenant [since even from them there was no redemption but through the prospective reference of the common victims to Christ], they who are called may receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance. 16. For, wherever there is a covenant [that is, such a one as the 'old,' or 'new'—a covenant framed by God for the pardon of human guilt. The writer is not speaking of any other covenant; nor would his language apply to such, since other covenants do not necessarily call for death, least of all do they imply sacrificial death], there is a necessity that the death of the covenanter (or covenanting party) come in [*i.e.* it is necessary that the covenanting party should die]. 17. For a covenant [still such a covenant as that in question—a covenant having God for one of its parties and man's redemption for its object] is confirmed through objects dead [*i.e.* by the taking away of life], since it is of no force whilst the covenanting party [the party undertaking the necessary obligations and engagements] is alive."

REMARKS.

(1) In order to the purging of sinners' consciences by His blood from dead works, Christ has been constituted *mediator* or *surety* (vii. 22) of a new covenant. And as such *He must die*. Otherwise there is no redemption. A *mediator* in an ordinary case acts his part by somehow persuading a stronger party to extend his favour to a weaker one. A *surety* gives security that the party represented shall discharge some obligations—who failing, the surety himself becomes liable. In the Christian case, however, there is no room for *such*

mediation, because the wages of sin is an inevitable death. Nor is there room for *such suretyship*, because the debtor neither has, nor can have, the means for any amount of payment.

Therefore (2) He who would be Mediator or Surety in such a case must die himself, otherwise there can be no redemption, no remission. Death—full satisfaction in order to full remission—this is the thing wanted in our case.

Hence (3) we are not in a condition to have a covenant made *with us*, in the strict and proper sense. The covenant must be made *with another* for us.* For if the covenant be *with us* either the work must be done, or the penalty endured by us. But if this be done *by another for us*, then *with him for us* must the covenant be made.

Thus (4) Christ is called “Mediator of the covenant”—not simply as the mutual *friend* of God and man—not as one persuading the two contending parties to a mutual adjustment of the affair; but because He comes *between them* in order that He may take the place and discharge *the obligation* of the weak and guilty one—to the satisfaction, and for securing the exercised favour of the strong and just One.

But (5) being a Mediator in *such a sense* (and He can be so in no other), He is at the same time, and of necessity, one of the two covenanting parties, so that—God Himself being unquestionably one of these, and man being the *object* of the arrangement—there must of *necessity be the death* of the other *Covenanter*. For such a covenant, under whatever form, derives its entire strength from the infliction of death—the death of the Mediator typically under the law—the death of the same Mediator really under the Gospel. It is He that dies in either case. (vv. 14, 15.) It is He that in either case covenants with God for man. And this, in point of principle, the Hebrews really understood. They knew

* Thus in viii. 8, “I will make a new covenant for (ἐπὶ) the house of Israel.”

well that any covenant of peace and pardon on man's behalf had no force except over the slain victim of God's own appointment. They knew that, should the victim—which was a typical mediator, a typical covenanter, just as much as it was a typical sacrifice and satisfaction—should this continue to live, then the guilty must die. And this, which was exhibited as a typical arrangement under the old covenant, the Apostle describes as a real and efficacious transaction under the new.

CHAPTER XVI.

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY—(CONTINUED).

EPISTLES OF PETER, JOHN, JAMES, AND THE APOCALYPSE.

WE come now to the testimony of those who had listened to the Saviour upon earth, beginning with the one who had ventured to rebuke Him—as his Lord announced His death, saying, “Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee:” and whom the Lord in still stronger terms then rebuked for so speaking—“Get thee behind me, Satan! for thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” Let us beware, then, how we stumble at the cross of Christ, and teach men that that *cannot be* which the Scripture says *is*.

First Epistle of Peter.—The first notice occurs in chap. i. 2—“Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”

As to why ‘obedience’ here precedes ‘sprinkling,’ we have only to remember that the penitent, believing spirit which precedes a sinner’s pardon and acceptance is a most real *obedience*, on his part, to the command, “Repent and believe the gospel”—an obedience to which he is brought by the quickening, renewing Spirit of God—and which then becomes the root of all other

obedience. (See Rom. i. 5 ; iii. 27 ; xvi. 26.) Then, as to the "sprinkling of the blood"—it has only one meaning, I maintain, in the Old Testament, whence the language is taken—namely, as a divine provision to atone for sin. The blood is sprinkled, as we have already seen, in various ways—upon persons, and upon things. But, wherever its design is mentioned, let any one show us a case in which that is anything else than the *atonement for sin*, with a view to its *being forgiven*. The reason of this is as simple as the appointment is beautiful. The blood contains the life; it atones *through* the life; and therefore, when it is put, by sprinkling, upon the guilty creature, it proclaims at once that, through the substitution of the innocent for the guilty, the deserved death has already taken place, and the forfeited life is now restored. Hence, in all the Old Testament, there is no such ordinance as that of sprinkling with *mere water*. Blood and water we find (as in the purifying of the leper); the heifer-ashes-water (called 'water of purification,' or *sin-offering*) for the benefit of him who had touched the dead;—but mere water, never. It would have signified nothing in itself; and in all these ordinances there is none without a meaning. Thus Peter, as a Jew writing to Jews, should not be difficult to understand, when he speaks of "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

From sprinkling, the apostle passes to *ransom*; and if the object of the one was plain to a devout Hebrew, no less so was the meaning of the other. A blood-ransom, I will venture to say, was a thing of as little ambiguity in the Old Testament as in the ancient world. It represented one thought, and only one. Whatever

was to come out of it or after it, the thing was what the word meant. Here is the passage, *vv.* 18, 19—"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot."

Now we have been told, in regard to this "impressive sentence," that we are apt to "read on in one habitual key of thought, but are surprised to find that it does not end on the key-note;" but that, on the contrary, "Modern ears and thoughts will anticipate a different ending" from the one contained in the words—"Redeemed from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers."* Now, the very thing we earnestly protest against is just "modern thoughts." Shew us that anything in our religion is modern, and at once it shall be sacrificed, however foolishly fond we may have been of it. The author of these words, indeed, does not take this view. He holds it to be no objection to an idea that it is modern. We profess, on the other hand, to take our "key-note" from no master more modern than Moses; and, beginning upon the one that he has set, we are not afraid of the unpleasant discord of "a different ending from what we anticipate."

For what is the key-note in the present case which Peter actually borrows from Moses? It is that very familiar one of a *money-ransom*. Their fathers had been redeemed—yes, their very lives ransomed from excision—just by corruptible things, as silver and gold, and a very moderate amount too of that perishable medium. Once, and again, had this taken place—the temple

* Rev. F. Garden, in "Tracts for Priests and People," No. iii. p. 4.

money still in use being just a relic of that ancient ransoming. And not only so; but these same ancient Hebrew lives had been ransomed by blood, especially that Passover blood, of which the memorial was still annually exhibited—not to speak of the day-of-atonement blood which was a real ransom (*copher*) for all Israel. What, then, but such ransom could Peter mean, or his Hebrew readers understand, when, as the keynote of his grand reference to the blood of Christ, he began by awakening the mind to those literal, substantial ransomings of the past? Let me say that if he has begun thus, and has not similarly ended, he ought at least to have done so. Meanwhile, we shall expect to find that he has, till the contrary be plainer than it is at present. An extraordinary confusion of sounds, indeed, it would be, if in the same breath with the words ‘ransomed,’ ‘silver,’ ‘gold,’ there should stand up, as the next, something pointing in quite a different quarter, and having no connection at all with *any such ransom*. This may be ‘modern,’ it is not ancient; it may be secular, it is not scriptural.

What then!—is not ‘vain conversation’ simply a ‘worthless way of living’?—and is not redemption from that equivalent, neither more nor less, to an inward and outward renewal of the bad or wrong lives alluded to? No doubt it would be just this, neither more nor less, according to certain modern thoughts; and yet, according to the Scripture, it may be something extremely different. Besides that view, which would thus obtrude itself as the only possible one, the Scripture deals much with another view—the one which specially concerns us now; and nothing can be fairer than the question, Which of these two is *the* view of the Apostle in the

present case? That question, I hold, is answered by his reference to the money-ransom—‘In the same way’ (it is surely this that he would signify), ‘not in a totally different way, have you been ransomed.’ Yes, the price is different—as different as the blood of Christ from a half shekel of silver—and the object is different—as different as temporal, bodily, life from life spiritual and eternal. But if words are to have any meaning, and figures are to serve as pictures—then the redemption will still be the same kind of event, and the blood will still be a ransom-price given to save the soul from being ‘cut off,’ just as was the redemption-money in the wilderness.

But what of the “vain conversation”? And where, I ask, is the difficulty? Had not that very thing brought death upon the heads of rebellious men—while they wandered about in the endless mazes of traditional prescriptions—some 613, for example, for a single act of hand-washing;* and for other observances in proportion! What, in fact, was the whole rabbinical code, or system of *tradition*, but one of the hugest engines ever contrived by rulers for the blinding and enslaving of the multitude? And what was the submitting to it by the people but a direct and deliberate choosing of darkness rather than light, and setting man in the place of God? It could urge, of course, the one unfailing plea for all iniquities—heathen, Jewish, or Christian, religious or political—namely, the venerable authority of ‘our fathers.’ It was, as St. Peter calls it, *πατροπαράδοτος* (received by tradition from your fathers). But it no the less belonged to ‘the father of lies,’ in opposition to ‘the Father of mercies’ and of ‘glory.’ “Why do thy

* See McCaul’s “Old Paths,” No. x.

disciples," ask the Jerusalem scribes, "transgress the *tradition* of the *elders*?" "Why do you," is the reply, "transgress the commandment of God by your *tradition*? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition"—at the same time mentioning the special tradition by which this was done—and then adding, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh to me with their mouth, . . . but their heart is far from me. But in vain (*μάτην*) do they worship me, *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*" (Matt. xv. 1-20.) "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." (Mark vii. 9.) And once more—in illustration of the same evil practice—"Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and all manner of herbs, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith." (Matt. xxiii. 23.) Thus did Jesus denounce their "vain (*μάταιος*) conversation received by tradition from their fathers"—declaring that the blind leaders and the blind led should fall into the ditch together.

Suppose now one of these blinded people to have his eyes opened and the death to which he was advancing displayed to him—suppose him to see that, under pretence of worshipping, he had only been mocking his God—would not his condition seem to him a very awful one? Will any one undertake to tell us how much of the killing burden of the guilt which crushed the awakened Saul arose from the memory of the years spent in that same "vain conversation?" Had this no share in the condition so terribly portrayed by him of

all unsaved men, whether Gentiles or Jews—when, after describing the state of the former, he added—“Among whom also we all had our *conversation in times past*, and were by nature *children of wrath even as others?*”—the direct cure for it all being “the exceeding riches of grace,” with the peace-speaking blood of Christ. (Eph. ii. 2, 3, 7, 13.) Yes, and however the key-note may jar on modern ears—yet it is the key-note of St. Peter’s teaching also in this very Epistle—that those to whom he was writing, proud as they had once been of their position, yet “in time past *were not a people*, but are now the people of God: which *had not obtained mercy*, but *now have obtained mercy*.” (ii. 10.) Thus their vain conversation put them outside of the family of God, and into that they needed to be restored; it called for mercy, without telling how it was to be had; and now that mercy had come at last, and come—how but “through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ?” How otherwise, then—as “not by silver and gold,” but “by that blood”—were these Hebrew strangers “redeemed?”

And if all this still need confirming, there is one circumstance, which should surely suffice. For what was the condition and special danger of the people of Israel in the wilderness, at the time when the money ransom was required for their lives, “that there be no plague among them”? It was nothing less than this—that, on account of the bad practices contracted in Egypt, their divine Sovereign had, in the most serious tones, spoken of “pouring out His fury and consuming them”—first in Egypt, then in the wilderness. (See Exod. xxx. 12; Ezek. xx. 5–17.) In such a state of things it was that they were saved by ransom from the death

to which their evil ways had exposed them. From the death brought about by corresponding evils—the regarding of man more than God—were their descendants ransomed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Lamb of God.*

Proceeding with the Epistle, we find the writer never weary of holding up the suffering Christ, as the great model of the tried and afflicted Christian. We have even been “called to this,” it is intimated, “to do well and suffer for it”—as “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps”—the example being then drawn out at length. So far, we learn nothing of the meaning, or object, of the Saviour’s sufferings, beyond their extreme moral value as a lesson to us. But it is never the mode of an Apostle to continue long in that strain; and therefore he proceeds to say—“Who His own self *lifted up* our sins in His own body *to the tree*, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.” This last was assuredly the Saviour’s grand *end*, and woe be to those who either deny or neglect it! But that does not hinder the equal reality of what goes before. If the last words are to have their true and full meaning, why should not the preceding ones have the same? Yes, and does not the

* Dr. Thomson in his Essay on ‘Atonement’ in ‘Aids to Faith,’ p. 339, says in regard to the above quotation from Mr. Garden—“This is the usual keynote of Scripture, but not the only note. The same Epistle speaks of redemption from wrath, and eternal death.” (1 Peter i. 5; ii. 10; iv. 17, 18.) It is to be regretted that an important position should thus quietly be surrendered. There is a notable want of precision also in the manner in which this is done—a defect of which there is too much in the Essay, and which has rendered it more open to exception than it should have been.

difference of the language in the preceding and succeeding sentences make all the more distinct the meaning of what intervenes? It does seem strange that the sacred writers cannot be trusted to express their sense in straightforward terms—strange that they should be so freely regarded as if, when saying one thing, they meant another! Let every word, then, in this touching passage, in regard to the moral influence and design of our Lord's death be taken, by all means, at its honest and utmost value. And let that word in the middle be treated with equal fairness—"Who His own self bare (lifted up) our sins in His own body to the tree." Just remember, it is a Jew writing to Jews;—it is the language of the Old Testament (and who will venture to show one break in the uniformity of its meaning there?) in regard to sin-bearing—language, in this case, taken from that impressive scene, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"—even upon Him who "poured out His soul unto death"—who gave Himself in the form of a trespass-offering—"bearing the sin of many"—that, "by His knowledge He might justify" them. This is what our Apostle now brings to the memory of his readers. And it is not for me to add to it.*

* Mr. Davies thus writes on the passage (Work of Christ, p. xxxi.) "He bore the sins themselves, not the punishment due to them. He had the sense of them, the true grief for them, a *share in the misery they cause*. [And is there *nothing of punishment in that?*] He had all this though sinless. And why? Not again that God might be free to pardon; but that we might die, and that, in contemplating His death and resurrection, might accept His mind and spirit, and being sworn to a penitent renunciation of sin, might live the life of faith and righteousness which Christ Himself imparts to us."—Here, again, we

The next reference very impressively shows a similar connection between Christian life and the Great Sacrifice;—"For Christ also hath once suffered for (on account of) sins—a just One for unjust, that He might bring us unto God." Now there is no need for straining any one of these words beyond its genuine sense. The one 'for' only means 'on account of;' and the other 'for' does not in itself *necessarily* mean more than 'on behalf of.' But the 'suffering' certainly means 'dying;' and it took place on behalf of those who themselves were *to have died*, and in order *that now they may not die*. This view seems as distinctly presented by this "Apostle of the circumcision" as it had been by his brother of "the uncircumcision." And how these ideas, when duly combined, can amount to less than 'dying instead of,' I am not able to perceive. The Just One dies, it seems, that—through their sin being carried up by Him to the cross—the unjust might live. Marvellous how it should ever be urged against us, as it constantly is, that this 'dying' is pronounced to have been for no less an *end* than "that He might bring us unto God!" Of course it was. Who ever doubted it? And to say nothing at all of consecration to God, or communion with Him—to say nothing of obedience, or yet of repentance as the simplest form of so coming—what pardon even, or acceptance, or justification, is to be had, except as we *come to God* to get it? Has not this been the one malady of man, to depart from God? What good, then, of any sort can be his, till he comes back to God?

see the determination not to take the expression—'bare our sins' in the Scriptural sense; and the determination to put *one of the fruits* of the atonement into the place of the *atonement itself*.

Was the approach, in old times, of the high priest to the Holy One a less real thing because he came only in virtue of that atoning blood with which he sprinkled the ark? How, then, can our true coming to God be impaired by the circumstance that it had been for ever impossible, except for the blood of Jesus, as giving us boldness to pass through the rent vail into the holiest of all?*

The next reference is very simple—"As Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." (iv. 1.) It is the same lesson as in the second chapter—Christ *dying for sin* for us; and we *dying to sin* for Christ—in a word, His cross for us, and our cross for Him. The exceeding importance of the one can never affect the entire independence of the other.

In the *Second Epistle* (ii. 1) we read of certain persons "denying the Lord who bought them." He laid down, it seems, a ransom for them; they might have enjoyed

* "There were (says Mr. Garden) barriers which the divine justice no doubt placed between God and sinful man. For perfect justice never can be on terms with sin . . . These barriers are broken down by Christ's sacrifice. Man is thereby brought to God. God's justice sees man presented to Him, such as He designed man to be, and is satisfied. The sin of the world is taken away; and all who will avail themselves of it can occupy a position in which man is righteous, and may serve God in holiness and righteousness without fear." (Tracts for Priests and People, iii. p. 21.) I can see only three ways in which this statement may be taken. (1) As an *ideal* view of redemption which might suit a Platonist, but is utterly foreign to an apostle, and most of all to St. Peter. (2) As really amounting to that which is so vehemently objected to, viz., *vicarious sacrifice*, and imputed righteousness. Or (3) as having no meaning at all.

the benefit of it; but they have rejected it with disdain—denying Him who presented it. And what is the consequence? They “bring upon themselves swift destruction.” Does not this—in connection with many other things—imply that the ransom laid down on their behalf was given as the means of delivering them from destruction—which now (through neglect of the ransom) is left to take its course, and that with the inevitable aggravation which the rejection of mercy has occasioned? It is hard to suppose such persons as going through such *destruction*, and coming out of it to life and purity again. And if we are able to imagine this, are we able also to imagine that their recovery comes through Christ, whose redemption did not save them from the destruction? It does seem hard indeed to find room for the restoration, through Christ, of those who are thus characterized—“Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not”—“The unjust whom the Lord knoweth how to reserve to the day of judgment, to be punished.” No, it is not with ‘modern’ eyes that we can look with safety on statements like these.

First Epistle of John.—“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (i. 7.) Is this to be interpreted according to the meaning of the words in the Old Testament or not? If not, I know nothing of what it means. If it is, then how can we understand *blood* as *cleansing* from *sin*, except in one way—namely, as freeing the sinner from guilt or liability to punishment? And is not this in exact accordance with what follows—“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins”? (i. 9.) A very remarkable

combination of words. "*Faithful* to forgive" is easily understood; it only needs a promise, however arbitrary or independent, and faithfulness must perform it. But "*Just* to forgive" is something quite over and above that. Nor is it easy to understand—however easy it may be to discourse about—this, except by having regard to the "cleansing blood." Through that is *sin forgiven* (I am speaking not 'evangelically,' but critically)—and then we are in a position to be *cleansed from all iniquity*—which last is as essential a part of God's salvation as the first. And what doctrine but this is it that we have in what follows?—

"These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous." And not an Advocate only—that is His present character; and for the present it answers perfectly. But we need something in the past as well; and that we have in this, that "He is the *Propitiation for our sins*: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (ii. 1, 2.) Here, again, we have the language of the Old Testament. We have the precise expressions used there for 'atone-ment' and 'sin-offering;' and how otherwise shall we interpret them, as belonging to a time when as yet all was ancient, and nothing 'modern,' but just as they were understood of old? As to how that was I can add nothing. Then come such thoughts as the following—"Your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." (ii. 12.) But how forgiven, except through the *propitiation* just spoken of? and how through that, except in the well-understood sense of the word?—"He was manifested to *take away* our sins." (iii. 5.) It is the same expression as when the Baptist pointed to his

Lord, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) Upon this follows close, "Hereby perceive we (His) love, that He laid down His life for us." (iii. 16.) Is it true, then, that *we* were to have died, and that He died *for us*? If so, then it would seem that the 'for' must mean 'instead of.' And how the writer himself understood it should not be doubtful, when we see how, in the next clause, he uses the same expression—"And we ought to lay down our lives *for* the brethren." Now it is quite conceivable that we may and ought to lay down our lives for those whose own life was in no danger. It may be my duty so to toil for the benefit of my brethren as really to sacrifice my life in their behalf. It might be my duty to give away my life—if that alone would suffice to open my brother's eyes in regard to some vital matter. But such would not be the natural and self-suggesting sense of the words. And certainly it would not exclude the other which, above everything else, at once presents itself to the mind—namely, that we should so intensely love the brethren as to be ready, at any moment, to risk our own lives, and, if necessary, give them up—so as to secure the safety or deliverance of theirs.

To the same purpose (iv. 9, 10)—"God sent His Son into the world, that we might *live* through Him;" and how?—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the *Propitiation* for our sins." It certainly seems from this that we were *not* to have *lived*, but died, except for this mission and propitiation. What has been said already of substitution and atonement need not be repeated. Let it be enough to add a word in regard to some remarkable expressions in the following chapter. "There is a sin

unto death," we are told, and it is in vain to pray that it may be pardoned; for there is in reserve for it nothing but death. "And there is a sin not unto death" (vv. 16, 17)—that is to say, *not inevitably* so; it may be pardoned; and with this view prayer is to be made. For he also who is thus guilty is already going down to death; and, being in such a condition, he is to be prayed for, that God *may give him life*. I take this merely as connected with what has gone before, and as furnishing an important illustration of these vital principles.

Epistle of James.—It is not here that we are to expect anything explicit about atonement. Still there are expressions that have an important bearing upon our subject generally. Thus we have views of death and ruin deserving the serious consideration of all who expect a universal redemption and restoration of our race. This "servant of the Lord Jesus Christ" seems to have been very free from such expectations. For it is hard to see what room his terrible words leave for such an issue:—"He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy;" "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death;" "There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy." And in such an end consists, we are told, the whole of "the treasure" which some "have heaped together for the last days." (ii. 13; i. 15; iv. 12; v. 3.) On the other hand, instead of our being all—through a mere human birth, or a mere human connection with Christ—the children of God, we need in order to this a new birth, "through the word of truth," by which our "souls are saved," and we become "a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." Thus we are made "heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised

to them that love Him." (i. 18, 21 ; ii. 5.) Once more, we have an important testimony to the divine method of justification : "The Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." We have also a notice of forgiveness, which we are forced to take in the ordinary sense of the word—"If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." And as the closing words of the Epistle tell us—"He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall *save a soul from death*, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (ii. 23 ; v. 15, 20.) I only ask what is the system of life and death, of atonement, pardon, and salvation, with which these words naturally harmonize ?

The Apocalypse.—Two expressions call for notice in closing—"Thou wast slain, and hast bought us for God by Thy blood." (v. 9.) Here, then, is distinctly a *blood-ransom*. The Redeemer comes, and *buys us for God*. He does something through which we may become God's ; and that is the shedding of His blood, or giving up of His life ; so that, through the giving away of His, we may recover ours. Is not this the thing pictured to us ? And in what does it come short of the most real ransom, whether as understood by such language, or as in such a case possible ? We have our choice, of course, how we will interpret the language—whether, on the one hand, we will take it as a direct and exact *figure* (for no description of this great concern can go beyond figure) of a real transaction ; or on the other hand, as only a sort of remote image of a figure—thinking it enough that the moral influence should be the same *as if* a ransom had been given—and content to use lan-

guage without the least regard to its meaning—as when it is said, ‘Such was *the price that God paid to win our hearts for Himself!*’

But now, if we, as believing in a real ransom, be asked—‘To whom, then, was it paid?’—our answer is—‘Paid to Him to whom the Scripture, from beginning to end, regards every sacrifice as offered.’ ‘But how can that be? (it will be said). Are we in the habit of paying the price *to* the party *for* whom we make the purchase?’ Certainly not; but then the creature is not the Creator, and we can both believe and see, that the difference between them is sufficient to allow for such variety in the treatment suitable for each. And thus, if the Scriptures assure us that Christ did most truly lay down His life as the ransom paid to buy us for God, we know nothing that stands in the way of our believing it—whether in reason or in feeling, in conscience or in custom.

The other expression is ‘wash.’—“Unto Him that loved us and washed (λούσαντι) us from our sins in His own blood;” “They have washed (ἐπλυναν) their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (i. 5; vii. 14.) Now this expression, it must be granted, is not an Old Testament one; for that never goes beyond the ‘sprinkling’ with blood. And so this—occurring in the last book of the New Testament—might be given as actually the first instance of divergence on this great subject from the style of the Old! What can be the reason of it? Can it be that—as the Saviour had spoken of ‘drinking His blood,’ although hitherto, even to taste such a thing had been forbidden—so now His beloved disciple could think of no purification less complete than a plunging and washing in the opened

fountain? I cannot tell. And yet one may be pardoned for asking whether the language is to mean less, simply because it expresses so much more?

CHAPTER XVII.

SATISFACTION TO JUSTICE.

IF we have reached our present point in safety—that is to say, if the principles advanced as to divine law and justice be sound, and the view presented of Christ's substitutionary death be correct—then we are prepared to apply these in answering some further questions about that death. It is enough, indeed, for all purposes of Christian faith to regard the Saviour's death in the simple light in which the Scripture has presented it—and the early Christians regarded it. For all that I need to know in order to a genuine confidence in an atoning Saviour is this, that He, the God-man Redeemer, took my place in regard to the death-penalty, thus delivering me from the judgment which was my due, and obtaining for me the forgiveness and justification otherwise unattainable. This surely is no blind belief; and yet there are thousands, whose faith is regarded by many as a very senseless or superstitious thing, who in their inmost souls mean nothing less than this when they speak of Christ as having died for them. Nor is it really necessary, in order to a full scriptural statement of the "Atonement," to go beyond the point now reached. But then such is the opposition made to some of the principles involved in this belief that it becomes needful, in maintaining the doctrine itself, to

answer certain of the objections made to it. The very idea of Christ's suffering a penalty in our stead, and thus making any kind of satisfaction to divine justice for us, is freely stigmatized as a fiction or an impossibility. Let us calmly look into the matter, and see whether the doctrine as now maintained involves anything fictitious or impossible.

Against the doctrine of satisfaction to justice, then, there may be brought a twofold objection. (1.) Against the doctrine itself. (2.) Against the application of it to the Saviour's death.

In regard to the *first*, it is naturally urged that the blessed God can never have satisfaction in the sufferings of His creatures—His desire ever being that they may escape suffering by avoiding sin;—the suffering which unhappily springs up in the train of sin being the reverse of satisfaction to Him. The answer to this is as obvious as the objection. It is simply that we must beware of the ambiguity of language, so as not to put words in the place of sentiments, or sentiments in place of principles. For the principle of the divine government unquestionably is—whatever we may think of the arrangement, and however we may regard the connection of the two things—that God *has attached* suffering to sin, and therefore must regard with satisfaction the operation of the principle, so far as He designs that it should operate. It is still open, of course, to deny that suffering comes in as a *legal penalty*, rather than simply as a moral concomitant, or natural consequence of sin. But this in no way affects the circumstance that the all-wise and righteous God must regard with satisfaction His own arrangement in regard to the consequences of

sin—however painful and dreadful these may be to the sinner. Hence if it can be rightly shown, on the one hand, that law involves penalty, and penalty implies suffering—while, on the other hand, sin brings down upon the offender the penalty with its essential suffering—then it is proved that there must be a satisfaction yielded to divine justice by the working out of the penalty which has been attached to sin. If it be true that the wages of sin is death (and no the less if it be penally so) then He who—whether by constitution of nature, or necessity of His own government—has fixed this connection, must have a satisfaction not only with the principle of the arrangement, but with its development also. Thus tried, does there seem any flaw in the view—that God, in the exercise of His holiness, entertains an extreme displeasure against sin—while, in the course of justice, He cannot but express that displeasure, or, in other words, let it out in a sensible manner upon the transgressor? And now if it be so that divine justice can thoroughly express itself, and divine displeasure can be fully brought out, only in the death or destruction of the sinner—prolonged or aggravated as that may be, within a vast range of possible limits—then what remains but that we accept the inevitable conclusion that there is a true satisfaction rendered to that justice when the penalty affixed to sin is carried out, and the transgressor does die the death adjudged to him? It was a satisfaction to the divine mind to frame such a law; can it be otherwise to enforce it?

Is it still objected that “suffering can satisfy only Moloch;” and that “only righteousness can satisfy God?”—then I ask for a little further attention to the argument—in the hope of showing it to proceed upon

a very superficial view of the divine character. Because in one sense only righteousness can satisfy God, does it follow that, *in no sense* and *for no purpose*, suffering can yield to Him, however indirectly, any satisfaction at all? Try the principle by a reference to human matters, and see how it stands. Suppose a parent with the most perfectly right feeling to his child, and who in one sense can be said to feel nothing but the very contrary of satisfaction in the child's suffering. And yet possibly that child might be enduring some great agony—and the parent, regarding that as the only hopeful means of the child's moral renovation, might amid his tears of sympathy have a real satisfaction at heart, not because of the suffering in itself, but because he saw it to be the means of so great a good. Such would be a thoroughly right human experience. Can you say it would be a wrong divine one? For if not so—then, in applying the principle on which you so confidently rely, you have been losing sight of a very important and needful modification of it.

But not only so—you will admit that a human governor may, for certain reasons, have a certain kind of satisfaction in seeing the law carried out to the extreme of its penalty. Of all things he least likes to see suffering and death. He is as far as possible from seeking any satisfaction in them as such. But they may be necessary, and, for the avoiding of what he dislikes still more, he may have the feelings now indicated. And why may not the divine Governor have, in all purity and perfection, that sort of satisfaction which in the human one can hardly be without some alloy? Was it no kind of satisfaction to the Most High to execute judgment on the old world, or on Sodom?

And when we think of all the judgment that He has executed since Satan sinned—is it devout, is it needful, is it possible, to believe that He has had no sort of satisfaction—for any purpose whatsoever—with His own holy and righteous acts? Is it possible for us to read the Scripture with reverence, and conclude thus? And yet what less than such a conclusion is involved in that principle which, stated so broadly and confidently, —is relied on more perhaps than anything else for overthrowing the doctrine of substitutionary sacrifice?

It seems, then, that there is some fallacy in the much vaunted principle. And what if it should lie in the forgetting that, however little satisfaction it may be to a right mind to contemplate suffering, the evil which brings it may be far more abhorrent. The parent who would naturally shrink from the child's agony can view it with that sort of satisfaction which he experiences, only because he shrinks with a keener revulsion from that rebelliousness which he hopes at last to see subdued. The ruler has no pleasure in ordering the death of a subject; but he has still less in contemplating the death of law and government. What, then, if it be the same with the Father of our spirits, and the Ruler of our lives! What more should be wanted to show us that, for a certain purpose, and in a certain way, the execution of the law's penalty may yield to the divine mind a most real satisfaction? Nor, until we represent the All-loving and All-righteous as simply delighting in suffering, should we be reminded that that is the characteristic of Moloch only. Such a style of arguing is sure to tell in a world like this, and very especially in a time like ours; and yet, to say nothing worse, it may amount to no better than a grievous misconception.

And, once more, when it is so confidently affirmed that nothing but righteousness in us can satisfy God—there is, it seems, one very important element in that great truth altogether forgotten. For there is the righteousness of God as well as of man to be taken into account. And what if the affixing and executing of a penalty to sin be such an exercise of *that* as gives a real satisfaction to the infinitely Holy One! And can you deny it? Then how will you answer the question by which an Apostle expected to quiet a whole storm of objection in his day—"Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?"—That is to say, God out of very righteousness was morally bound to take vengeance against the world's sin—because, however distasteful to Him the vengeance, the sin was still more so; and however He *would have had* satisfaction in the righteousness of men if obedient—He no the less certainly *had* an *actual and most real* satisfaction in His own righteousness when taking vengeance against the disobedience. Thus, so long as it stands true that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against men's ungodliness and unrighteousness"—it were strange theology indeed to forbid us to believe that, in the midst of all His positive dissatisfaction with the doing of man, there was just as really a positive satisfaction on God's part with His own. And yet it is nothing worse than this that we maintain, and must maintain, even in spite of comparisons with Moloch. Thus, when it is objected to us that, while "A magistrate may accept punishment as the end of the matter; a father can only accept, or be satisfied with righteousness"*—the objection cannot touch our position, which is this—that 'righteousness'

* Bishop Ewing, "Present Day Papers," Introduction.

is just the thing in which God is finding satisfaction—whether it be in the direct punishment of sin, or in that higher display of it provided by the Cross.

(2.) There still remains the grand objection against *vicarious* satisfaction. This, of all things, is supposed to belong to the fictitious and absurd; and, for the complete annihilation of the view, it is thought sufficient to plead that *suffering* can never be acceptable to God, but only love and righteousness. But what if the objection, insuperable as it is regarded, proceed upon a misapprehension of the case? True, if *the divine object* in the attaching of the death-penalty to the law were to torment the sinner, or to cure him of his bad dispositions, or simply and directly to *destroy him* in the true sense of the word—then vicarious satisfaction would have no place at all, because of its utter antagonism to all such objects. But if, on the other hand, the punishment of sin (I say nothing of fatherly or providential chastisement in the exercise of mercy, but of the *law* which declares that “the wages of sin is death”)—if this punishment be nothing else than the expressing, through the action of divine justice, of that displeasure with which God in His holiness regards sin—then the matter assumes a very different aspect. Naturally and directly, of course, and in the absence of any special arrangement, the action of justice will take effect on the person of the offender. Still will the actual object be served if the thing really take place in any way at all. For the whole object and meaning of the infliction is, by the supposition, really and thoroughly to bring out the divine mind in regard to the evil that has been done. And if only that end can be effected by some other

means than the death of the sinner—by any means in fact, involving an actual and adequate display of justice, whether antecedently conceivable by us or not—then there is no longer anything either fictitious or absurd about the arrangement. The only question—in the supposed recourse to substitution—will be as to the possibility of finding the adequate substitute. Now such, the gospel tells us, has been found, through the incarnation of the Son of God. The God-man, it assures us, in giving up His life—to estimate the worth of which would require measures which earth and time do not furnish—He, by such means, has obtained life for those who deserved only death—forgiveness for those who otherwise were condemned. For why, or on what ground, was that life taken away? Was there, in that transaction no expression—none at all—of the divine mind against sin? Did not God see the shadow, yes, and the very substance of His own justice there? and if so, was there no satisfaction in such a spectacle when beheld under such an aspect? For if there was the very least of this, then the whole principle is conceded. And is it so easy to refuse the concession? Had not the great Governor already linked together, and that in a very distinct manner, human sin and death? Was not death in *every* form understood to be

* The following is a remarkable instance of such a concession—“Acting for others, He makes His soul an offering for sin. He enters into the condition of death, into the hiding of His Father's face. . . . Whatever is the acme of suffering for sin, He the Sinless accepted. Doubtless the sweat . . . the prayer, ‘My God,’ &c. . . . were at some point such as this. He subjected Himself voluntarily to the laws of transgression—whatever they were—that He might free those tied and bound.” [Would not this writer maintain that *the laws of transgression* were simply the *corrupting*, the *alienating* and *ruining*

the wages of sin in *some* form? And shall a perfectly sinless being—one maintaining a position so entirely unique—no great angel, no mere man, but a second Adam, and a veritable God-man—shall such a one appear, and, appearing, go so far out of what would have seemed His natural course as to *die*—and that expressly as a sacrifice for sin, a ransom for the lost—and yet after all shall there be in this no utterance of God's mind, no expression of His displeasure against sin—or if so, no satisfaction to Him in that expression? But then the sin which has drawn out such expression is the sin, not of the Sufferer, but of those for whom He has suffered. And so far as the expression is complete—so far as God has acted out towards sin the displeasure with which His holiness regards it—then, so far, in other words, has justice acted its part; and so far as justice has acted its part, so far has it obtained that satisfaction which it had craved of the sinner personally, but the yielding of which on his part would have implied a death from which he could never have recovered to reap the benefit of the satisfaction.

If thus, then, the *principle* of the case be established there need be no further difficulty as to the full proof of the great truth—that, by the sacrifice and

of the transgressor?] “But His offering was not made or accepted because of its greatness, or because thereby the law was discharged, but because it was the fitting thing, the thing required to put away sin, even the sacrifice of God Himself.” [That is to say, while the law really was discharged by the ‘subjection’ of such a one ‘to the laws of transgression’—while this was in fact *the very character and meaning* of His suffering—yet this gave it no part of its value, its acceptableness, or its efficacy!—See Bishop Ewing's “Present Day Papers,” Introduction, p. 41.

death of the God-man, there was offered a complete satisfaction to divine justice in the room of sinful, perishing men;—a satisfaction in virtue of which we may now have life instead of death, and forgiveness in place of condemnation.

If it be urged that this ought to secure the actual life and justification of all men indiscriminately—this, I answer, depends upon other conditions and arrangements not pertaining to our present enquiry, but which will be alluded to in the sequel. Enough if we establish the great truth of vicarious satisfaction—the thing so loudly denounced as the fiction and absurdity.

If it be further objected that all this is too metaphysical and complicated for the simplicity of a divine arrangement, and the intelligence of ordinary humanity—I answer, that we are not responsible for that. I am only examining the objections made to the doctrine that Christ did, in the genuine sense of the terms, “give His life a ransom for many.” It is enough for me to take, and to tell God’s gospel, as He Himself has given it out; nor do I much desire any words in addition, much less in preference to His. But if the sense in which we take these words—their only sense as we honestly believe—be stigmatized as absurd and impossible, then what remains to us in the interest of truth, and for the defence of the gospel, but that we endeavour to show that there lies against our belief no such objection as is alleged; but, on the contrary, that the article objected to both involves an essential element in the divine law, and constitutes the very soul of the Christian atonement?

Once more, if it be objected, as it may obviously be, that there is in no department of human affairs any

parallel to the substitution and satisfaction now argued for, the answer is, that, strictly regarded, this is perfectly true; and the reason is that there is no parallel to that which forms the basis of the whole—namely, God's law and government. There is, no doubt, in human law and government some *analogy* to the divine; but *parallel* there is none—just as there can be among men an analogy, but no parallel even to the fatherhood of God; and all because there is none like God Himself. "Who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord?"—is a question which must ever apply, not only to the divine Governor, but to His government also. It may fairly be questioned, indeed, how far there can be law at all in the real, full sense of '*Thou shalt*,' and '*Thou shalt not*'—except only under the rule of Him who is the Law-giver, because He is, first, the Creator and proprietor of all. It is true, of course, that human laws, also, have their penalties; but, as the laws themselves have in them so much of merely prudential recommendation, so the penalties have in them a corresponding share of merely prudential threatening. Enough that, in each case, the elements of prescription and penalty keep pace as to their specific character. It will naturally follow that any compensative arrangement, in case of impending punishment, will—under human government or divine—partake of the distinctive character of the antecedent circumstances. And this, I plead, is precisely what we meet with in the gospel. We there meet with a compensative arrangement, a vicarious satisfaction, which is absolutely original and unparalleled, simply because the law and the penalty which give the whole meaning to that arrangement are absolutely confined to the government of the Most High.

And is it nothing that this, upon strict examination, should be found to be the character of Christ's atonement? Is it nothing that an arrangement so mistaken and maligned should, when strictly scrutinized, stand out as at once so simple and sublime?—so entirely original, and yet so level to ordinary intelligence?—so suitable to man, and honourable to God; and, though without a parallel on any other field, yet differing from any analogous arrangements only as their fundamental elements may differ? To such a transaction all the sacrificial observances, Jewish and heathen, had been pointing from the first. They had been at the best merely symbols foreshadowing a great event which they could only suggest, not express. Even when they had degenerated into those monstrous misrepresentations of which the world was full, they still retained that which indicated their better original. And now to see all the mists cleared away, all the mistakes corrected, all the monstrous conceptions of the human mind sent back to their own chaos—and to see realized in the cross of Christ that satisfaction to justice which the divine law claims as its inalienable due,—this surely is no common circumstance—not at all like human folly, but extremely like divine wisdom,—not in the least like either to natural darkness or artificial light, but altogether like the ordering of Him who “is Light, and in whom is no darkness at all.”

And what an extraordinary idea that all this satisfaction to justice is brought about by death—one death—a single life being given as a ransom for so many! Can anything equal the boldness of the conception—even the thought of the Eternal Word coming into the

world to live as a servant, and to die as a sacrifice? And such is the divine idea announced in the gospel; one life—one death—for man's redemption. Yes, but even among ourselves one life can be equivalent to many lives; one death can have in it all the varied practical moment of many deaths. How, then, attempt to estimate the worth, or limit the influence, of the death of the Incarnate Word?—of Him who—pointed at one day as the sin-bearing Lamb—on another day “stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.” Or, again, does there seem to be the shadow of a difficulty in regard to the shortness of the period occupied by the Saviour's dying? And yet what is time, in such a case, any more than number? So long as the sufferings of one man for one day may exceed the sufferings of another for a life-time, there should surely be no objection, as regards duration, to the sufferings of the God-man. It is essential, indeed, to the idea of the *ransoming* of life, by the *sacrifice* of life, that there be a real correspondence between the death to be averted and the death undergone—that is to say, between the adjudged death and the atoning death. And this being the case, it is certainly hard to see how the actual death upon the cross can furnish a true satisfaction to a justice which demands no actual death at all, but the everlasting suffering of a deathless creature. The attempts to show this may well indeed seem desperate. With what very different feelings can we contemplate the *real death* of the Christ, as a divinely appointed satisfaction to the justice which required the real death of the offender! There still, of course, is, and must be, a difference. Without a difference on the very largest scale, the ‘One’ could never be a ransom

for the 'many.' But to differ, as on this ground the two must differ, is not to be incongruous and incommensurable as, on the other ground, they must be. How suitable, on the contrary, does the one life, so given, seem as a ransom for the many lives so doomed! And if ever an individual was fit to represent a company—who should be more fit than the SON OF MAN to represent the whole multitude of those who, in virtue of their own nature, bear the name of His adoption? Thus not only can our faith accept of His one life as a ransom for our lives among the many; but our whole soul can respond to the arrangement as equally grand and simple. And if, in addition to all this, it be the fact that, while the living One became capable of dying, it was impossible for Him to continue under the power of death—that will only illustrate the dignity of the Offerer, and enhance, and not diminish, the value of His offering.

But there is another objection to our belief which we must not overlook. Of all objections, in fact, on the ground of principle, it is the most important, and has more influence, probably, than any other on a large class of minds. For it is indeed a serious thing if the ransom or substitution which we profess to see in the gospel neutralizes and destroys the very idea of pardon. And this is just the thing so confidently alleged—namely, that it would be simply a mockery to profess freely to remit to any one his debt, or his punishment, only after the debt had been paid, or the penalty borne by another.

Let it be frankly admitted, then, that the gospel, according to our view, does contain—in whatever con-

nection—the two elements which are thus represented as contradictory. Each of the two does have its own place in the Christian redemption. And, more than that, they have been received as the soul's best hope, not only among the unreflecting millions, but by multitudes of the most thoughtful and scrupulous believers; and that without a suspicion of their incongruity; but, on the contrary, with the most open-eyed conviction that only thus could the seemingly conflicting claims of God's law and grace be harmonized.

Is the gospel, then, after all a hopeless paradox? Is such the best that we have to offer to the understanding and the heart of humanity? Are we asked to receive redemption as we receive a Trinity—counting it our highest wisdom to accept first one fact, and then another, because each is clearly revealed and attested—all the time feeling that the real harmonizing of the two, though very simple perhaps to devout spiritual sense, is yet quite beyond the province of our searching intellect? Is this the position in which we stand as regards the atonement of Christ? No, I answer, there is no *such* mystery or difficulty there. The grand mystery in that is just the mystery of excellence—the whole of the concentrated excellence of the God of glory. The gospel is the revealing, not the veiling, of the love, wisdom, and righteousness that shine out in our redemption.

But how—if the whole debt is already paid—can God do otherwise than remit it? Where the ground is already occupied by justice, what room is left for grace?

Ample room, I answer—both at the one end and the other of the great transaction. At the beginning of it—

because grace, grace alone, chose and gave the ransom. Therefore, whatever comes of it, it is all the doing of grace. Nor is it easy for a guilty soul, in receiving mercy, to make light of this—whatever of righteous arrangement—yes, whatever of satisfaction to some inviolable demand may be interwoven with the gracious donation. Was it needful that the Son of God should give *His* life as the ransom-price before mine could be redeemed? And do I now—on the ground of that *vicarious offering*—recover the life which was so certainly forfeited? Yes; and recover it in the form in which ‘everlasting life’ is now held forth as God’s gift to man! What, then, but the truest, freest, richest grace, can this ever seem to me? And yet this is just the view that has come home to Christian hearts and minds innumerable.

But this is not all. There is the *application* as well as the *arrangement* for the outflow of redeeming mercy; and that is such as leaves no room for the objection which when put into a hard proposition looks so formidable.

Take a simple illustration. Suppose a company of people in debt, or bondage, or under some penal sentence. Having them in my power, I am anxious to release them; but, in consideration of certain rights or interests, I judge it necessary that a certain satisfaction or compensation be offered on behalf of the company; and this I am prepared to act upon as equivalent to any discharge that they could make of their own obligations. At the same time it is no material payment of each or any man’s debt that is contemplated—obliging me in justice to let that man go at once, on the ground of the settlement. For the understanding

is, that the compensative arrangement, which is of a very general kind, and refers to the company at large, shall take effect in case of those only who shall acknowledge my right over them, and humbly apply for relief, on the ground of the arrangement—at the same time declaring themselves ready henceforth to do what is right. Suppose further that the whole of this arrangement has been entered into at my own express wish and cost—in my extreme desire to provide relief for my prisoners, so as at the same time to secure the inviolable interests at stake. Does it appear, then, as if such circumstances were incompatible with a really free pardon? Would any of the indebted, in his sober senses, otherwise regard the boon when extended to him? Suppose one of them to say, ‘I will have no such pardon—it is no pardon at all to remit a debt that has been paid already; to smile upon me with pretended kindness only after full satisfaction has been rendered for my offences: I understand no such grace.’ Suppose this, and what is there but pity for the man that he should be so unreasonable and ungrateful, and should so stubbornly rivet his chains upon himself?

This, then, I will venture to give as a sufficient answer to the objection, that a free pardon is incompatible with *such a satisfaction to divine justice as the Christian atonement implies*. The whole thing is as far as possible from that which is rashly assumed to be our belief, and which would amount to this, that any one of the debtors in the supposed case might come to the creditor and say, ‘Let me go; my debt is paid, and your right over me is at an end.’

Suppose now that, in addition to all this, I say to the offending company, ‘Come, friends, and have a free

pardon for your offences; with all my heart I offer it to you; and, lest you should for a moment doubt me, I tell you that I have engaged to give it to you upon a proper application—hence you may count upon my faithfulness; yes, and more than that, I even hold myself bound to give it to you on the ground of the arrangement announced.’ Could even this then (the whole design and deed still resting with the one benefactor)—could this for a moment impair the freedom of the pardon? Would it not rather enhance, as well as secure it, in the view of a right-thinking mind?

And yet such is the precise attitude which the sin-pardoning God has assumed. For “if we confess our sins, He is *faithful* and *just* to forgive us our sins.” (1 John i. 9.) He has actually bound Himself to bestow pardon on the believing penitent. On some ground or other He has not only promised His mercy, but pledged His faithfulness, aye, and His very justice, to grant it. Strange! he does not even say ‘merciful;’ the least that he says is ‘faithful:’ and even that is inadequate without the addition ‘just.’ So little incompatibility does an apostle see between the two things that men would now bring in as contradictory.

To the same purpose does another apostle teach—only much more expressly—in a passage devoted to the very object of showing what divine ‘righteousness,’ under one form or other, has done for man. “We are justified freely by His grace”—is the teaching—and that, “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” The connection will have its significance with us, according to our view of the truths connected. And so also will we regard the “propitiation through faith in His blood.” But the weighty point at present is the

attitude of divine righteousness towards sin. And this, says the apostle, has been twofold—*first*, more partial; and *now* more conspicuous and active. In former times God showed Himself as *passing by sin*.^{*} This was in the exercise of His ‘forbearance.’ But mere forbearance would not do, he pleads; it needed, even then and for this, an exercise of that ‘righteousness’ which He now ‘declares’ in the great ‘propitiation.’ The divine ‘pretermision’ of past sins is thus shown to have proceeded upon the ground of that “righteousness” which God “declares at this time.” And then mark the triumphant action of the manifested righteousness now—“That He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus.” It would be idle to argue from any peculiar meaning of the word ‘and.’ Let it be taken simply as it stands, and the connection between divine justice, and a sinner’s justification—a necessary connection, surely, according to the apostle—stands out with that distinctness and grandeur which at once dissipates every objection to the reality of pardon on the ground of a true satisfaction to justice going before. The case is extremely plain, and really wants nothing for its establishment beyond what seems so manifest, namely, that ‘justify’ must signify (as in Rom. iii. 20, *cf.* 19 and viii. 33, *cf.* 34) the contrary of ‘condemn’—while it is as clearly the apostle’s object to point out the harmony between the justification of sinners on the one hand, and the action of the divine mind or government on the other. One cannot but wonder at the outcry that has been made against ‘evangelical’ writers for taking ‘and’ in Romans

^{*} For “remission” we must, as required by the word, read “pretermision of sins.”

iii. 26 as equal to 'and yet.'* But, however certainly admissible such a sense, it is neither necessary nor advisable here. All that we contend for comes out with the simple 'and;' though, for the reason given above (page 219), we have no doubt at all that the real sense of the word is—"That He might be just, *even when justifying*," &c.

Our conclusion is this, that the satisfaction rendered to divine justice by the offering of the great sacrifice, instead of precluding pardon, is the very thing that prepares for it. That satisfaction has not bound God to pardon the offender, in any such sense as when a man goes and pays down to a creditor the sum due by a neighbour. It has not, in short, given us any claim upon God; but it has thrown open, as wide as the world, the door of mercy. I am well aware how odious this sentiment will be to many—as if the door of mercy needed any opening; I know how they would just as soon hear of the throwing open of the floodgates of wrath, as of the gate of mercy. I will only ask such to consider that that is not our present question. All that we have to do with now is the compatibility of a true mercy with a real satisfaction to justice. This they deny; and I have endeavoured to answer their objection. And if they will only suppose for a moment that God *may in justice have attached* to sin a *real death* as the only fitting penalty for it—then they may see that there would, in such a case, be no incompatibility in His accepting a satisfaction to that justice, before He could extend a pardon otherwise impossible—a pardon which would involve the real redemption of the life sentenced.

* Alford goes so far as to say—"And yet, on the other side."

How they abjure and abhor all such thoughts I am quite aware. But granting the one which pertains to justice—can they say that the other presents an impossible view of mercy? And that is our entire problem in this place.

CHAPTER XVIII.

INCARNATION AND ATONEMENT.

HAVING thus examined the Scripture view of sacrifice and atonement in connection with the theories now in question—it is of importance that we take up some of the chief elements of those theories separately, and compare them with the Scripture teaching on the points to which they refer. We begin with that great fact which, alike in Scripture, and in the writings objected to, forms the basis of the real or assumed Christian redemption—THE INCARNATION.

Now it seems at times as if this, in itself, were considered in these writings to have achieved everything. Such, however, must be regarded as only an exaggeration. The real view—as appears from the passages cited above (chap. x.)—is that the Incarnation of the Son of God—as necessarily drawing after it the service, or self-sacrifice, sympathy, and sorrow, which made up the Saviour's life, and led Him on to His death—that this really constitutes all that atonement or sacrifice for sin of which the Bible speaks. And this is offered to us, not as a casual view, but as a theological system. Is it then, we ask, the view presented to us by Scripture, or not?

The INCARNATION of the Son of God—what a fact!

If ever there was a real thing—a divine thing on the earth—surely this stands out as such, when contrasted with all the mockeries, human or devilish, to which the world had been accustomed. Man had shown what he could do, whether in contriving incarnations, or in corrupting such revelations as had been divinely granted to him; and now in the Lord Jesus, and that simple story of Him which transcends all fabrication, as the grandest of divine doings must transcend any paltry human device—in this does God show us Himself, and somewhat of *His* capacity. We see, at last, what God in love can stoop to—and what He designs to raise man to. Already, on the one side, is the union perfect—of God with man; and as perfect shall be, on the other side, the pledged communion—of man with God. Yet there is a temptation—not to magnify (that were impossible)—but to misplace and misrepresent, the incarnation. And here is another of the Scripture marvels, let us say miracles, that, after so unreservedly setting forth the Incarnation with all its attendant services and sympathies, it should so freely add to these an element which man would never have dreamt of, or dared to add—and which being now added to it he is so fain to tear away. Yes, verily, the incarnation with all its necessary accompaniments is a marvel, a mystery of divine condescension and love—even such as seemed to leave behind none greater—none comparable. And yet possibly the very crown of the marvel may be that the incarnation was the opening of the way to the cross—a cross which was something more than the necessary temporal end of that road which commenced at the manger; because on that cross was offered a sacrifice altogether distinct from the human service and sympathy

of Emmanuel—as distinct, in fact, as the bearing of a penalty from the performing of a precept—as different as the giving away of life by a voluntary death from the employing of it in benevolence, whatever the cost. You may deny, till the very last, that the Scripture adds any of this second element to the incarnation; and you may do your utmost to show that all that *we* call satisfaction is absorbed in what *you* call sympathy; but you need not be surprised if others shall object as strongly to believe with you as you object to believe with us—and shall content themselves with the conviction that what *you* call divine is all absorbed in *their* more enlarged idea of the human.

Where, then, we ask, does the Scripture give that view of the incarnation so earnestly contended for? Where does it ascribe to it the place and proportion which leave so little room for that view of atonement which has so long obtained? Where, in short, does it ascribe our salvation to the grand manifestation in the flesh, in connection with results *inevitably attendant upon it*? Take, for example, the opening passage in the fourth Gospel, which stands alone in the evangelic history, and is hardly equalled throughout the New Testament for fulness of statement in regard to the subject before us.* And is it to the incarnation as

* It is marvellous what a stress has been laid upon a single sentence in this passage—"That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Now, without insisting on it (as a matter merely of *emphasis* or *sentiment*) that this is not the *precise* idea of the evangelist—it would surely be more becoming to know how "the Light of the World" regarded Himself, than to snatch up such a sentence, and put any sense of our own upon it—"I am the Light of the World. *He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*" (John viii. 12.) In this sense alone

such, that our salvation is there ascribed? Then what means the call—"Behold the *Lamb* of God that taketh away the sin of the world"? No two views could well be more entirely distinct than that of the Incarnate Word, and the sin-bearing Lamb; while yet no two could show a more perfect relationship. If, indeed, "Lamb" suggested simply the idea of meek submission; if the giving up of its life represented devoted service; if the taking away of sin by a lamb signified the turning of men's hearts to God—then, indeed, there were nothing in the character of "the Lamb of God" but what would *necessarily* connect itself with such a fact as that of *the incarnation*. But if, on the other hand, the language of the Baptist signified something essentially different from all this—then equally different is the idea of Christ's atonement from all that pertains merely to His voluntary standing in humanity. And so in regard to that most striking of all references to His incarnation which occurs in the following book—how notable it is that its great moment is made to centre in the blood

it is—and to this extent hitherto it has been, that the Eternal Word, coming into the world, has "lighted every man." Just see, then, how much has been made of *the words of this passage* by one who thinks that "the faith in the incarnation, in its largest sense, is absolutely inconsistent with [what he calls] a superstitious treatment of the human authority of Apostles, or the literal text of the Bible." For thus he refers to the words—"To me it seems certain that St. Paul, and St. John alone, among the Apostles whose writings are recorded, had gained anything like a conscious grasp of this truth [incarnation]. . . . Even St. Paul apprehended it, I think, only in relation to the *conscious* life of faith. . . . He held that Christ was the centre and root of the social unity of the Christian Church . . . but I can see no trace that he had yet learned to extend the same truth to the whole world of humanity, that he had grasped the fulness of St. John's teaching, that 'He is the light which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world.*'"—R. H. Hutton, "Theological Essays," p. 270.

with which He purchased the church! (Acts xx. 28.) A style this strikingly unlike that with which we are now so familiar—unless, indeed, we can dare with some to take the redeeming blood as simply expressive of the warm sympathy and loving service of the God-man!

Or take the epistle which of all others most expressly deals with the principles of the Christian system—and do we find there the incarnation set up in that place in which we are now asked to regard it? In vain do we look, and look again, for any such representation. With many distinct references to the Saviour's death as the great means of our redemption, we have one such view of incarnation as this—"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh"—and here the writer might have stopped. For what, according to the modern teaching, did this not imply? True, but according to Apostolic teaching, there was one thing quite as essential which was not implied in it; and therefore to the "sending in the likeness of sinful flesh" it was needful to add—"and as a sin-offering." And so in the sequel—"He that spared not His own Son, but" (but what? sent Him to share in all that pertained to humanity? No) "delivered Him up"—and well we know to what—"for us all." Or, is the question this—"Who is he that condemneth?" And what would naturally, I may say, necessarily, according to a certain system, be the answer? What a temptation for the ardent Apostle to have spurned away the possibility of condemnation by a God who had so lovingly and entirely identified Himself with the erring human brotherhood! And yet this was not the view that presented itself to him—"Who

is he that condemneth? *It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again.*" (Rom. viii. 3, 32, 34.)

Close upon this there follows one of the most distinct notices of the incarnation to be found anywhere. (Rom. ix. 5.) And what is the object and bearing of it? Simply to show the transcendent privilege of the Hebrew nation as the divinely ordained channel for such blessing to the world.

Thus the enthusiastic Apostle presents truth to Roman Christians. And how to Greeks? What a field here for a mind like his to expatiate on those engaging views of incarnation, and its inevitable concomitants of which we hear so much! Of all subjects none was better fitted, whether for the grandest picture or the highest speculation. Taken in the form in which it is now set forth, it would have exactly suited whatever in the Greek mind had the least tendency towards Christianity. And yet, in spite of all this, the Apostle tells a Greek company that his great business had been to preach—what? Not God incarnate—with all reverence be it spoken—though it was that which furnished the basis, and conferred the redeeming value on all the rest—but "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness" Yes, says he, "I delivered unto you *first of all* that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. i.; xv. 3.) Is this, then, the way in which he would have expressed that kind of belief in regard to the incarnation which is now imputed to him, and which, with its own proper ramifications, is supposed to represent the entire gospel which he preached?

Or, take another statement, as made to the same

church, which will be considered rather favourable to this extreme view of incarnation—"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." This, in short, was the Apostolic ministry as here described—namely, the most distinct announcement that God, through the mission and work of His Son, had begun and still continued to carry on a great business of reconciliation towards the world—the import of which, whether as graciously purposed, or actually effected, was equivalent to the "not imputing their trespasses unto them." And on what ground?—"He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin." Now, can any one open his eyes on this strange sight, and believe that Christ's being "made sin" is nothing really distinct from the Word being "made flesh"? For that, as we have seen, is very much the view so zealously urged upon us as the summary of Christianity. Was it true, then, in any sense, that Christ was "made sin" *because* He, the sinless One, felt with the very heart of God towards sin, and, Himself "separate from sinners," did yet daily mix with them? When the Great Father follows with His yearning love the wandering prodigal—even that very God who once 'repented that He had made man, and it grieved Him at His heart'—does *He* feel, does *He* show in that, anything like an approximation, even infinitely minute, towards being "*made sin*"? Or, suppose a celestial messenger coming among us, to compassionate us, and counterwork other unseen powers—would that imply any approach on his part, towards the condition thus represented? How, then, does it alter the case when One, as great and holy as the Eternal Father Himself, puts on our nature and dwells among us? He sees, of course, He feels, in humanity, the whole mean-

ing and dreadfulness of sin—and, as He sees it, He shrinks from it—and the closer it presses, and the more subtly it works against Him, so much the more brightly does He show that He and sin can have no fellowship. All this is not incidental, but essential, to the holy humanity of the Son of Man. How then, consistently with this, can the element of the humanity—the fact of the incarnation—answer in any way to the description of being “made sin”? Does it not rather seem as if the whole system of such a humanity, the entire course of such an incarnation, proclaimed, No, in no possible, in no conceivable sense—carrying the view to its utmost limits—can it be said that “HE was made sin”? For, if to feel perfectly in regard to sin—if to feel towards it with the heart of God even in humanity—if this be to be “made sin”—then what shall we say of God Himself whose feeling is supposed to be incarnated in the man? No, the theory is a mistake. It may, indeed, be dressed out before the eyes of this generation, and under the artificial lights of sentiment and system, with all the flowers of rhetoric and the fascinations of eloquence; but it cannot bear the light of day; it cannot stand the touch of reason. And then, when you take the Saviour’s being “made sin” as the direct means expressly designed for God’s *not imputing of sin*—and when, with this, you remember that the Apostle had just taught that Christ *died for all*—with the clear implication that by this means we come to *live*—when you put all these together, it will be hard to maintain, with any show of probability, that the fact and the circumstances of the earthly sojourn of Emmanuel met in any sense the idea of His being *made sin*. And besides all this, how should we need to think of Him *now*? Are not

His sense of sin, and His sympathy with man, as acute as they ever were? Is not the humanity still as real as ever it was in One who, just because He *is* THE SON OF MAN, has received the commission to execute universal judgment? Is He still, then, made sin for us? Would that some would candidly endeavour to answer this to themselves. Let us remind them that the words of the Lord are “pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times”—and that they cannot be made to mean just what we, with intentions that we count ever so good, may declare them to mean.

There is a single sentence in this Epistle which might with less of impropriety be employed in the manner to which we are now objecting—“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (viii. 9). Suffice it to observe that this passage no more really teaches the *deity* and *incarnation*, than it does the *atonement* of Christ. Each of the three, as elsewhere taught, is here implied—the whole being specially applied for the practical object which the Apostle had in view.

The following Epistle (*to the Galatians*) is one where it would well have suited the writer's purpose to make the very most of the incarnation—or, let me say, to have developed to the utmost its great principle, together with whatever that really involved. We find accordingly that he has, and in a very pointed manner, referred to that; but in what style? “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.” (iv. 4.) Here is the incarnation—the whole of it—with all the subjection to God and man

which it involved, and all the inevitable results which the circumstances of the world into which He came entailed upon the Great Incarnate. And now another point—"Made under the law;" another I say, because it is neither equivalent to the previous one, nor yet involved in it. "Under the law" does not mean merely a human subjection, like that of the first Adam, as expressed by the words "made of a woman." It means subjection in the sense in which men as sinners were subject—the sense which had been so distinctly exhibited in the previous chapter. For to be "under the law" on our part was to be "under the curse;" and, to "redeem us from that curse," "Christ was made a curse for us." And so if, in the following chapter, He is said to "redeem them that were under the law," that surely points to their being under the *curse* of the law; and as surely His being "made under the law," *with such a view*, means that He came under the curse of it. And thus, instead of the whole falling under the view of *incarnation*—instead of incarnation, with whatever it properly *involved*, being the redeeming power—instead of that, it required, as St. Paul distinctly teaches, a new thing altogether—something over and above the humanity of the Son of God to constitute such a power. Thus it is that we are redeemed from the curse, and adopted into the family. And just let any one go through the epistle, and note the proportion and relation of these two great topics—incarnation and atonement. As to the one, we have it all, I think, in the verse now commented on. As to the other—"Christ *gave Himself for our sins*" (i. 4); "I am *crucified with Christ*," and "live by the faith of the Son of God, who *gave Himself for me*;" but "if righteousness come by the law, then

is Christ *dead in vain*." (ii. 20, 21.) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being *made a curse for us*." (iii. 13.) "God forbid that I should glory, save in *the cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ." (vi. 14.)

The Epistle to the Ephesians together with that to the Colossians—corresponding as they do in much, and differing perhaps in more—are worthy of regard, each from its own point of view. The divergence of both from that to the Galatians is very marked; but though each of them, like it, would have furnished a special reason for giving full prominence to the incarnation, neither of them does so. Where, for example, in the former of the two do we meet with any express notice of it? and where, with that thread of thought which, if the case had been as we are told it is, would this have been more natural? We do find the blood of Christ, as the great means of forgiveness and of access to God. (i. 7; ii. 13; iv. 32.) Of the cross, we are told, not the manger, that it slays the enmity, and reunites to God. (ii. 16.) We have "Christ giving Himself for the church"—"giving Himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God." (v. 2, 25.) While, if we take the epistle as a whole, it is just a magnificent detail of the blessing which comes *to the CHURCH from the FATHER, through the SON, by the SPIRIT*—together with a corresponding exhibition of the church's duty to that God who has so blessed her, and the relation to one another of those her members who have received such grace in common. But as to the assertion or implication of redemption by the incarnation, where under any form or colour do we find it here?

The *Epistle to the Colossians*, while presenting to a large extent a fresh picture of the same blessings, presents them in a singularly different aspect. Here it is not God who has forgiven us in Christ—but Christ Himself who forgives. (Eph. iv. 32, *cf.* Col. iii. 13; Eph. ii. 1–10, *cf.* Col. ii. 13.) Instead of “one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”—it is now (and this may be taken as the very key-note of the epistle) “Christ is all, and in all.” (Eph. iv. 6, *cf.* Col. iii. 11.) It is natural that, in such an epistle, the very highest things possible should be spoken of the person of the Incarnate One, of His supereminent dignity, and His absolute preëminence in the universe of God. And all this is said. (ch. i. 15–20.) Yes, and all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him *bodily*. (ii. 9.) Thus He became incarnate that He might redeem. We may never for a moment question that. But still the incarnation is not represented as in any sense the *redemption*: for “We have redemption *through His blood*,” and no one can ever show any connection between the assuming of flesh, on the one hand, for the sake of fellowship with man in duty, sorrow, suffering, and the shedding of blood, on the other hand, in order to forgiveness—except in so far, of course, as the one was an essential preliminary to the other. Thus, as elsewhere, so here too, it is not by His appearance in Bethlehem, but by His exodus on Calvary—even “by the blood of His cross,” and “the body of His flesh through death,” that He makes peace and reconciliation. (i. 20, 21.)

But of all the Pauline Epistles, the one that should best suit the argument on the other side is that to

Philippi—where, with no specific statement as to ‘atonement,’ or ‘forgiveness,’ or ‘Christ giving Himself for us’—we have, on the other hand, a statement of incarnation more specific and complete than anywhere else in these writings. “He was in the form of God” (such is the view); and yet “He did not regard equality with God as a thing to be caught at (contended for), but emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (ii. 6, 7.) And for what purpose a picture so touching and stirring of the great incarnation? All, that we may “have this mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus.” Yes, positively, this is the expressed design of the writer in presenting that overwhelming view of divine condescension! Only he cannot stop here. Grand as the view is, he must pass on to another scene, and call attention to the great design of the Incarnate One as it appears there—“Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Just one thing more, and the picture is complete. Because He thus stooped beneath all—therefore “God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name.” Thus we have the incarnation and the cross combined, as earning the title to supreme dominion. And that is all that the Apostle teaches here—nothing very different from what we have always thought—but extremely different from that theory for which we are asked to exchange our old belief.

And such is the Incarnation. It is a practical exhibition of what God Himself is, especially as regards His condescending, self-sacrificing love towards man—while

at the same time it forms a perfect revelation of what He designs man to be, to do, and to become. Without such a manifestation we never could have conceived of such a Deity; we never could have conceived of such a humanity. If anything can show how completely such a fact exceeds human imagination, it is just those incarnations that have been actually imagined by men, and all which are utterly wanting in the two grand elements which constitute the true one—namely, the exhibition of deity, and of humanity—to say nothing of the objects professedly contemplated in each respectively. The Bible, in fact, contains two great circumstances equally peculiar to itself, and sufficient to distinguish it from all other documents ever presented to mankind. It begins with a perfect creation, and it goes on to a perfect incarnation. And yet the latter, though seemingly the humbler, is surely the more wonderful of the two. In creation we have the wonder of the Eternal God pouring forth on a desolate emptiness the wealth of His own measureless contrivance and execution, and filling the universe with a countless throng of obedient servants. In the Incarnation we have this God of boundless fulness “emptying Himself,” and coming down to a servant state. At creation “the morning stars sang together.” As for the marvel of incarnation, the angels are still “stooping over” it—while “to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places is made known through the church,” of which the Incarnate One is Head, “the manifold wisdom of God.” No wonder that there is a temptation to think that an event so stupendous has in itself effected everything. And so it *has*—everything properly involved in it—everything of necessity issuing from it. And among

these is the manifestation—on its own field—of *what* God is—and of what man should be. Such surely was an object worthy of the *life* and the *life-work* of Emmanuel—to say nothing of that cross and kingdom of which it was the indispensable foundation. He must needs “humble Himself,” just as He did, before He could be “obedient to death”—and He must be “obedient to death” before God could “highly exalt Him, and give Him the name which is above every name.”

But still after all, sin-bearing and blood-shedding were no part of the incarnation—they are no way involved in it—they do in no sense flow from it; therefore I will say—with the whole Bible to fall back on—these things were not effected by it. But if ever there was such a thing as a means to an end—and if means and end are essentially distinct—then the incarnation was a means to the atonement as an end, and as such distinct from it; while at the same time it was the means to a great deal besides—possessing in itself a value altogether incalculable, apart from that end which is so commonly represented in Scripture as the main design of that sublime act of humiliation. Let us just suppose a platform as set up, exceeding any erection that was ever seen among men—and so admirable that we should almost hesitate to speak of what was to follow as superior to it—a platform which was even by itself to serve greater purposes than had ever yet been served by any actual building—but still a platform, which never would have been but for the building which was to follow. ’Twere a pity, certainly, if we should, in admiring this platform, show any disposition to depreciate that element in the building itself which happened to be the most extraordinary and admirable

circumstance even in a whole of which no single thing could have been adequately conceived beforehand. Let us be content then to give its proper glory to each of these matchless circumstances—Incarnation and Atonement. There never was any jealousy between the two. Nor is it needful that we should in any way depreciate the one in the interest of the other.

Take now the *two Epistles to the Thessalonians*, and what have we in these? Christ dying for us—Christ raised from the dead—Christ returning in glory, and for judgment. Such is all the Christology that we find there.

Of the *Epistles to Timothy* the same might be said, with the exception of two passages. "There is one Mediator between God and man, *the MAN* Christ Jesus," says the apostle, in introducing the most definite of his single statements regarding atonement by ransom (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) There is in fact so little of incarnation in the passage as to make it peculiarly acceptable to those who reject that truth altogether. The other passage amply supplies the want. But, while standing unsurpassed as a testimony for incarnation, it contains no trace of the idea that the Son of God, by any assumption or exercise of humanity, redeemed or presented it as an acceptable offering to His Father—did, in short, any one of the things that are now represented as having been thus effected. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh;" and in connection with this manifestation are detailed five grand circumstances. But not one of them comes near to the demands of the theory before us.

Take next, the *Epistle to the Hebrews*; and here, if anywhere, we have a complete view of the design of the incarnation. The chief subject of the epistle, in fact, is just the Saviour's "appearing in the end of the world"—the object of which, we are assured, was "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Besides this, we are presented with another view of kindred importance—His "appearing now in the presence of God for us." And will it be rash or partial if I say that these two views present us with the substance of what the writer has to communicate as to the object of the incarnation? Thus, "He who was the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person, when He had *by Himself purged our sins*, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." What this purgation of sin means and how effected, the whole epistle, without an ambiguous note, will teach us. Then we find Jesus "made lower than the angels"—and why? "*that* He should taste death for every man." Again, we have the destined Head of the family taking on Him the nature of the children—"that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death." And once more, we find Him "in all things made like to His brethren," *that*, as a High Priest, He might be fully competent to atone, or "make propitiation for the sins of the people." (i. 3; ix. 26–28; ii. 9, 14, 17.) To the same purpose all the super-eminent excellence of His priesthood, as elaborately argued from the constitution of His person, is summed up in this—that He perfectly, and once for all, effected, in the offering of Himself, what others had to be ever so laboriously and imperfectly repeating. (Chap. vii.) To the same purpose we are told that "*Christ being*

come" has displayed the object of His coming by "offering Himself without spot to God"—which He did when He shed His "blood"—to "purge our conscience from dead works." (ix. 11, 14.) Then comes the famous reference to the "doing of God's will," and the employment of the "body prepared" for Him;—from which it appears with extreme plainness that that will is just that we should be sanctified or cleansed, not through the assuming of the body, with all the love and sympathy of which that was the continued residence and expression—but "*through the offering of the body once for all*" even by His "*offering one sacrifice for sins for ever.*" (x. 9-12.)

So we find *another Apostle* writing expressly in regard to the incarnation—"The life was manifested, and we have seen it." (1 John i. 2.) We find him insisting, in the face of the Gnosticism of his day, on the necessity of believing that "Jesus Christ was come in the flesh." (iv. 1-3, 15.) But not one trace do we find of that view of incarnation now pressed upon us—precious as the fact itself certainly was to the disciple who had leaned on the bosom of the Incarnate One. Nowhere, in short, throughout the New Testament do we meet with the view, or with anything corresponding to the pictures given of it by its ardent promoters. I am aware how they may meet us with the answer, 'Neither do we find anything corresponding to your idea of *substitution.*' Perhaps not, but there is this difference; we offer them passage after passage in which we venture to declare that the words mean that, and nothing else—as well as many other passages which have no value except as illustrations of the same;

while we plead that a similar principle is clearly exhibited in every atoning sacrifice. They, on the other hand, offer us no proof at all ; but simply ask us to regard the incarnation, in connection with its attendant circumstances, as itself effecting that which, we maintain, the Scripture ascribes solely to the atoning blood or substitutionary death of the Redeemer.

How the Scripture presents that death and sacrifice, as compared with the view given of them by the writers opposed to us, we shall next consider.

CHAPTER XIX.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

THIS—in the peculiar way in which it is taken—may be regarded as the key-stone of the system under review ; and, as it is in favour of such a view that ‘substitution’ is repudiated, we must consider how it is represented, and what place it occupies in the system.

The following sentences, from the extracts given above, will sufficiently exhibit the mind of the writers :

“The Apostle does not say that Christ died *instead* of all, but as the Head and Representative of all. He no more died that we might not die than He rose again that we might not rise again. . . . When He died His members, those comprehended in Him [that is to say, as it is distinctly explained, all men] died also. He died and rose again, that His dying and rising might be a law to them, that they might die and rise with Him. Because Christ who is our Head and Archetype manifested Himself through sacrifice, therefore all human duty is seen to be sacrifice, and sacrifice to be the one duty of man.”—“The act of Christ is the act of humanity. His righteousness does not supersede our righteousness, nor does His sacrifice supersede our sacrifice. It is the representation of human life, and human sacrifice—vicarious for all, yet binding for all.” . . . “In Christ God saw humanity submitted to the

law of self-sacrifice, and, in the light of that idea, He beholds it as perfect, and is satisfied.”—“We may see how the union of Christ with His brethren renders this gift propitiatory in its effects upon them. For it is human nature which He has offered up in spotless sacrifice to the Father. The whole race is represented in Him. He is the Head and Root of all mankind. Therefore mankind now stands accepted before God; and every sharer in the kind may at once plead and occupy the righteous position which has been won for it by the accepted sacrifice of its great Representative.”*

I now ask how far all this is scriptural—how far it is intelligible—and whether it exhibits a proper use, or a manifest abuse of words?

Observe, it is ‘humanity,’ ‘human nature,’ ‘mankind,’ ‘the whole race,’ that is said to have been offered up to God in Christ—it is this that He is supposed to behold as perfect;—yes, “mankind now stands accepted before Him;” and the individual man “may at once plead, and occupy the righteous position won for the race.”

Let us consider. Mankind accepted because of the sacrifice of its Representative—that is the thing taught. But what was there about mankind that was previously unacceptable? Its sin, of course—yes, and nothing less than the removal of this could make it acceptable. But how can such removal take place otherwise than by the purification of individual men—unless some one can imagine a general purification of the race independently of the purification of any of its members. This then, will be granted, the *individual* must be purified. But if so, how was the whole race accepted in a Repre-

* See chap. x. above.

sentative? 'True,' you say, 'but in Christ we see what we ought to be—we see what is really pleasing to God—we see how God has accepted our great Representative—with His most precious sacrifice—we see what love it was to provide us with such a Head, especially when we consider what it cost Him to sustain the relation; and thus we have the kindest and strongest help that could have been devised for promoting in us the same spirit of sacrifice.' So then, after all, Christ, by His great sacrifice, has only supplied us with a very powerful means for our becoming personally and practically acceptable to God; and, in so far as we truly enter into His spirit, are we really acceptable—for "we are personally reconciled to the Father, *in proportion as* the sacrifice of the Son becomes the moving law of our life." Thus we are given to understand that, Christ being what He is, "such a manifestation as His yielding Himself to a hated death for our sake is a power of atonement *which ought to be irresistible*." That is to say, Christ, by His sacrifice, has given such an exhibition of the heart of God, and sent forth such an appeal to the heart of man, as is fitted above everything to break down our self-will and win us back to God. That we can understand. But then we cannot understand how it means that 'humanity,' or 'mankind' has been either offered to God, or accepted by God, in Christ. We can understand a provision either accepting all or making them acceptable; we can understand the *actual accepting* of any man, or number of men. But we cannot understand an accepting which, on the one hand, means something more than a *provision* for the accepting of *all*—while yet, on the other hand, it falls short of the *actual accepting of any one*. We cannot, in short, make out

what this accepting of 'humanity' means. We could suppose it to be a full-blown antinomian scheme for the safety of the human race, akin to certain high predestinarian schemes for the safety of the elect. But antinomian it is not—the very reverse of that—though it does look and sound in that way, so long as we survey it by itself. For then we feel as if carried away by a pleasant reverie, in which we have a vision of the human race as certainly, actually, and universally, redeemed and restored—presented and accepted—adopted and justified—in the life and death of a great Representative. Less than this would hardly seem to be meant by the words, "What Christ did *for* humanity was done *by* humanity, because in the name of humanity;"—He being "the Representative of humanity, the reality of human nature." Again, "There were barriers which divine justice no doubt placed between God and sinful man; for perfect justice never can be on terms with sin These barriers are broken down by Christ's sacrifice. Man is thereby brought to God. God's justice sees man presented to Him *such as He designed man to be, and is satisfied.*" Or thus, "In Him we see God justifying us freely—accepting us in our unworthiness as His own children."

Now, if these last passages, and some of the previous ones, really have any meaning, what can it be but just that which is so vehemently objected to—namely, vicarious sacrifice and imputed righteousness, on behalf of mankind? Taken by themselves—though certainly not without obscurity—this seems the only sense that they naturally yield. For how can we understand this presenting and accepting of humanity in Christ—this doing *by* humanity what was done *for* it—except by

supposing that He did some work, or presented some offering *instead of it*?—that is to say, did for it something which it was bound to have done for itself—and not having done could not be accepted by God. And yet it is just this that these writers repudiate beyond everything. What, then, is the meaning of those statements? I must frankly confess that I cannot tell. I can only see what the writers mean by simpler statements which they seem to intend as equivalent to the others, and by which they certainly do express what is in their minds—as when they say, “He no more died that we might not die than He rose again that we might not rise”—“He died and rose again, that His rising might be a law to them; that they might die and rise with Him.” His sacrifice, in short, has this for its one object—to promote a similar sacrifice in us personally. But then there is in all this nothing of the *Representative*. To say that there is is a mere abuse of words. A ‘representative’ is one who, for the special occasion and business on hand, represents or acts for another party. It is to no purpose to tell us that the ‘vicar’ only did what the whole monastery was, and continued to be, bound to do. Yes, but so long as he rightly represented the body, he actually did take away the responsibility from the others—he really did the work *instead of them*. Even here, then—and this is the very weakest case that could be given of a ‘representative,’ inasmuch as *the* ‘vicar’ only does what any other one might have been appointed to indiscriminately—even here, the work that was ‘vicariously’ done for the others was not, as has been said, “binding *for*” them;—for no one ever imagined that *they* were still bound to do *in their own persons* what he had done *for* them in *his*. The whole

fact is that the brotherhood appointed the vicar, and the vicar attended to the cure instead of the brotherhood.

But now in regard to the real position of a 'representative,' it requires something more than a free use of the word really to assist us in our enquiry. For this, like other words, is employed more strictly or loosely, as the case may be—sometimes certainly with the design of expressing that the 'representative' is only doing what the 'represented' was, and still is, bound to perform personally. In all such cases, however, it is needful to consider whether it is really *the same thing* that is first *done for* and then has to be *done by* the party represented. Thus the representative of a sovereign at a foreign court performs an act for his master which thus becomes *binding on him* and has still to be done by him; but when we look into such a case, it immediately appears that we have not *one* thing to deal with, but *two*. The thing done *for* the sovereign is the *arrangement* of some matter; the thing to be done *by* him is the *execution* of it. In the one the 'representative,' for certain manifest reasons, *acts for* his master; in the other he is no longer a 'representative' because the master *acts for himself*. Thus in such a case there is an *ambiguity* of speech, which if not strictly guarded against is too apt to lead into a fallacy in argument. In the same way the 'representatives' in a national parliament are only the nation's servants to carry out its will in the most suitable form. The nation appoints them for this purpose, and holds itself bound by their decisions as it would be by its own. If we say, however, that a thing has been done for the nation by its representatives

which the nation is still bound to do for itself—the only true meaning of this is, that the *enactment* has been made by the *parliament*; and the *execution* remains to be carried out by the *nation*. Thus again, it is only in the first matter that the parliament ‘represents’ the people—and even that only as a matter of convenience. In this however it really does act *instead* of the nation—and the nation is in no sense bound to do the thing which the parliament has already done.

Thus we see that even in these cases—and none could be less favourable to our view—the ‘representative’ is supposed to perform a truly ‘vicarious’ work—whatever personal duties that may impose upon the other party. In what sense then are we to regard Christ as our Representative? Now we may of course use this word in any sense we choose, if we will only explain what that is. But we ought not to make use of the word so as to take advantage of the extreme importance attaching to it—while yet employing it in a sense that does not actually belong to it. And the real sense—especially where the word is chiefly employed, as in matters of law, government, or property, as well as generally in mere ordinary matters—does point to a relation strictly *vicarious*.

Thus, considering what a very important place this word occupies in the religious system which we are examining, and how the natural sense of it seems to be tacitly assumed by the promoters of that system, it is of consequence to understand whether they really do use the word in the natural sense, or in some other, without giving us the needful explanation on the subject. I honestly declare then that, after the best attention I

can give to the subject, I can find no other *real meaning* in their use of it except that Christ Jesus is, as we all know, the great Model-man—the true Representer of the capacity, obligations, and dignity of human nature. In Him we see what God made us to be, and meant us to do. Thus He represents to us our duty, our perfection, our bliss. Thus does He stand before us at every turn of life as our Exemplar, our Archetype—"Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Whether in life or death, in short, it was His great business to show us what we have to be. Such, I repeat, is the utmost of real meaning that I can find in the writers before us as to the representative character of our Lord. I find much, indeed, that I can in no way bring under this one head—much that I find no explanation of in them, and cannot understand at all. But, in so far as they explain themselves in a way that I can understand, this is the whole of it. It is an unsatisfactory way, I admit, of explaining many of the phrases and descriptions employed. But I can find no other. Thus, when we read of a "righteous position won for the race by the accepted sacrifice of its great Representative"—what righteousness, I am constrained to ask, is there in the position of the race now which there was not before? There may be a position of fresh advantage for the attaining of righteousness, but what is there of a "righteous position"? Are men's sins *de facto* put away? Are we held as righteous personally, or reputedly, or in any sense whatever? Is any good deed or right feeling either less requisite, on the one hand, or, on the other, more acceptable to God—more sure to win His approbation now than it was before?

What, then, am I to understand by the "righteous position" thus won? Am I told that "mankind now stands accepted before God; and every sharer in the kind may at once plead and occupy" that position? But, surely, if mankind already stands thus accepted, then I, as a sharer in the kind, already share in the acceptance. What belongs to mankind belongs to me. And how, then, do I require to "plead and occupy" the "position won for the race"—yes, and occupied by it too—inasmuch as mankind already "stands" in it? Waiving, however, this last important point—just suppose that, in regard to the 'pleading,' I come and say, 'Lord, I do desire that position; grant, I pray Thee, in Thy great mercy, that I may occupy it'—would not that be a proper 'pleading'? would it not ensure a real 'occupying'? But then what if I mean all the time, that I want simply the 'acceptance won by our Representative'—while yet I altogether shun the self-sacrifice by which He won it! 'Oh then you show (it is said) that you dissent from the very terms of the fellowship—you could not in that spirit, however anxious for it, either occupy or enjoy the position.' Precisely so; I believe it. But how, then, does 'mankind,' which for the most part is just of this mind, 'stand accepted'? That is my difficulty. And again, if our acceptance is morally impossible, except in the possession and exercise of a truly righteous spirit—then how was the actual winning of it merely "by the sacrifice of a Representative" a possible thing at all? There were obstacles to it, of course—else there had been no need of such a sacrifice, and such a winning. What, then, has become of the obstacles? And how has this righteous element got a lodgment in humanity? Has there been any transfer-

ence of righteousness, or of its contrary?—any of that which is so loudly denounced as a fiction when put forward by others in other connections? And if there has been no sort of transference on either side of the properties of the other party, how has the acceptance been won for unconscious mankind by the sacrifice of a Representative? In a word—if such a position is to be acquired only by personal righteousness, how comes it to be won by the sacrifice of another? And, if through that it has been won by ‘mankind,’ then how can it be less than the equal, actual, and inalienable possession of all? This, no doubt, is a very pleasing view of the relation of humanity to its Representative. But there is another view, and it was given by the Representative Himself—“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John iii. 19.) Such would hardly have been our calculation of the influence of the great Light upon the world. But it is the fact, and that is enough to silence a hundred speculations.

Let us now see what the Scripture teaches as to our Lord’s representative character. One thing, then, is clear;—in Him we have a perfect exhibition of humanity, and in Him alone of all that have lived as men since Adam fell. In Him we see at once the dignity and prospect of all who are made partakers of Him and His salvation. In this sense we may freely allow the propriety of calling Him our Representative. For though such is not the *proper sense* of the word—according to its use in the important matters that would furnish us with the most fitting analogy—yet it is an

application which cannot be objected to. For it is certainly true that He *represents* to us what we ought to be. Such a title as "*the Second Man*" cannot possibly signify less than this—if, indeed, the Second was to triumph where the first had failed. And there is a title even more tender and familiar which teaches the same—"THE SON OF MAN." How sweetly does this signify that He is no stranger, visitor, or august friend merely; but one of ourselves—in whom as in a mirror we can see at once by contrast what we are not, and by reflection what we have to be. Does it therefore follow that in all that He did, as the Son of man, He was presenting humanity as an offering or sacrifice to God—acquiring for us the favourable regard of His Father and our Father—in short, "winning acceptance" for us? Is this what we are now asked to believe, wholly or partly, on the strength of the important word "Representative?" And where did the word get this application? Or sliding somehow, as it seems so easy to do, from the word 'represent' to the word 'present,' is it the fact, I ask, that humanity in whatever sense 'represented,' is in any such way 'presented' to God? My answer is—first, I find abundant assertion to this effect in certain human writers, but not a trace of evidence for it in the Word of God; and, secondly, I find myself entirely unable to understand what it means. I read that "the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins;"—"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;"—"Authority to execute judgment" has been given to Him, "because He is the Son of Man." All this I believe, because it is revealed; nor have I any difficulty in apprehending what it means. But the other I have neither ground for believing, nor power to comprehend.

Another case of our Lord's assuming that expressive title will illustrate the same—"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Now here, certainly, is the great model MAN exhibiting the duty and privilege, the perfection and glory, of humanity—expressing all the sublimity of love by the gentleness of His own example. Here in a word we have Him both representing humanity to men, and presenting one human offering in all possible perfectness to God. This—however much more—we have in *that* view of the Son of Man; and there is nothing certainly in this to release us from, but everything to fasten upon us, the obligation to a similar disposition. The same, however, cannot be said for what follows—"And to give His life a ransom *instead of many*." For here is an act done once, and never to be repeated. Here is a Representative indeed—in the genuine and most complete sense in which we ever use the word. ONE appearing for *many*—and giving up *His* life to ransom *theirs*. Such a 'representing' of one person or company by another the world has always considered equivalent to 'substitution.' There was even here, indeed, one thing designed for our imitation—and that was the *spirit* of the Redeemer's act; but an act is one thing, and the spirit of it another. Such a spirit in this case might of course impel us even to give up, in the fullest sense, our lives for the brethren. And if so, what would that be but substitution?

How, then, are we to understand the life of our Lord as presented in Scripture? Was it, as is alleged, a sacrifice in common with His death—of the same atoning, that is to say, reconciling character—offered and

accepted with the same view—the difference lying only in intensity of purpose, clearness of exhibition, or other circumstances—each being, in fact, as we are now so positively told, a grand offering of humanity to God, with the view of obtaining, or promoting, a corresponding acceptance on our behalf? Is it thus that Scripture presents the life of Jesus in conjunction with His death? And may we, in accordance with such a view, argue that He no more lived that we might not live—no more worked that we might not work—than He died that we might not die, or rose again that we might not rise?—each of these things being, in fact, just as much *on our behalf*, and as little *in our stead* as any other of them. Is this the truth or not? I answer, It is not.

For how does the Scripture speak of the life, and the life-work of Jesus? Does it say that this was *for us*—that is to say, *instead of us*—as it says His death was? If so—where?

Thus our Lord Himself speaks very freely of the character and purpose, both of His life and of His death. When only twelve years old, He says—“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business.” (Luke ii. 49.) Besides which, we find just one other expression from Him before entering upon His ministry—“Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” (Matt. iii. 15.) After that, His earliest utterances are those in the wilderness—“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;”—“It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;”—“It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” (Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10.) Soon after this we find Him acting so as to remind His disciples of the words, “The zeal

of Thine house hath eaten me up." (John ii. 17.) Then throughout His life, so far as His personal service goes, here is how He describes it—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work" (John iv. 34);—"I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me" (vi. 38);—"I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of Him that sent me" (vii. 18; viii. 50);—"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work" (ix. 4);—and then in His agony, "Not my will, but Thine, be done" (Luke xxii. 44); and before Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John xviii. 37.) Such was the entire earthly life of Jesus, with His own infallible account of it. Such, *personally* regarded, was His ruling passion, His guiding principle, His constant practice. And then relatively to us, His object in so living is stated with equal distinctness. Was this, then, that He, by living righteously *in our stead*, might get us excused from a similar living? Nothing could be in more flagrant contradiction to His whole teaching than such an idea; for nothing can be more conspicuous than the very contrary design, which is just this—that, we seeing Him so live, might long and learn to do the same—"If any man serve me, let him follow me" (John xii. 26);—"I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (xiii. 15);—"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. xii. 50.) Such was the life-work of Jesus, and the life-lesson of it to us. Such was the sacrifice—far beyond all that 'morning' or 'evening' had ever witnessed,—with

which His earthly time was filled up; and such the aspect in which He Himself regarded it. It possessed, in a word, all possible excellence; but it presented no element of substitution.

And what of His *life-sufferings*? Were *they* substitutionary? The Scripture nowhere says so; and therefore I cannot believe it. On the contrary, my mind recoils from it as a diseased excrescence of human system, equally foreign, like so many other things, to the simplicity and sublimity of the divine plan. It was impossible, indeed, that 'the Son of God' should become 'the Son of man' without undergoing a certain suffering from contact with sinners. But neither can we suppose an angel to have spent a night among the cities of the plain without a similar feeling—and yet there would never be in such feelings anything of an atoning element. When Jesus was tempted, He suffered; but so would any holy being naturally feel—and yet we should never connect atonement with that. A night of feverish unrest—a day of cold or hunger, would have its suffering for Jesus as for us; but to suppose these as in any sense *atoning* seems only to expose the great idea to contempt. And why indulge such imaginations at all? It is true that sin is the source of such sufferings to man. And yet even in our case, they may mean something different from penalty. They may mean simply a loving discipline—in connection with the complete removal of the penalty by other means. And why may they not on the same ground have been equally dissociated from all that was penal, or atoning, in Jesus—namely, *because all that was otherwise met by Him*? Why, in a word, are we not content with the

information—where, as in this case, there is no notice, and no need of any element in addition—that “He *learned obedience* by the things which He suffered”?—and that our High Priest behoved to be one who could “sympathize with our infirmities,” by being “Himself tempted in all things like as we are”? But, besides all this—there was no *death* in these things; and yet that—and that alone—is the whole that we have to do with in this matter—death ranging from that most simple view of it as spoken out in Paradise to that most awful exhibition of it as bursting out in the lake of fire. And now (if the Scripture is to guide us) there is just one thing that can remove that death from our sinful heads. No life-suffering could avail here. Death—death alone will do. And the one death has so effectually done it, as to leave absolutely no room for anything besides. Nothing atoned for sin, in the type, but the altar-blood. Nothing atones for it in truth, but the blood of the cross.

How, then, after all that He said of His obedient life, did our Lord represent this wonderful death? Sometimes, as we have seen, He spoke of it merely as an event of the most solemn moment; at other times (and that is our concern now), of its *relation to us*. Thus He speaks of His “blood as shed for many, with a view to the remission of sins.” He tells us that HE, as “THE Good Shepherd, giveth His life *for* the sheep”—adding, “I lay down my life *for* the sheep” (John x. 11, 15)—and signifying, on another occasion, that He was about, in love, to lay down His life *for* His friends (xv. 13)—the same great occasion, in fact, when He announced the shedding of His blood. Thus He

spoke of His own death in words and connections which were perfectly understood to mean such a dying for others, as that they should not need to die themselves. Such was to be the relation of that death to us—and to this we find no trace of a parallel in all that He said of the blessed life that preceded. Nor is this all. He was in the habit of expressly speaking of true believers as *not dying*—"If a man keep my saying he shall never see death;"—"He that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die;"—"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me . . . is passed from death unto life." (John viii. 51; xi. 26; v. 24.) And still further, He distinctly referred this 'not dying' to His own great sacrifice in death—"So must the Son of man be *lifted up*, that whosoever believeth in Him should *not perish*, but have *eternal life*." Connect this with His other words as just given—and what less, according to any rule of right reason, can it mean than that He died for us, for this very purpose, that, believing in Him, *we might not die*? And, once more, when He discourses so fully about 'not dying' to the multitudes that He had just been feeding, to what does He refer this deathless life? To the Bread of life as presented and partaken of. But that was nothing else than His own crucified body, with its outpoured blood. It is the same lesson again—not His dying that we might die too—but His dying that we *might not die*. Beyond doubt, there is a dying wanted on our part, to correspond with this dying on His part. Christ must die, and Christians must die like Him—such was His great lesson on the famous occasion when the Greeks came, saying, "We would see Jesus." (John xii. 20-26.) His meaning plainly is that the evil thing in us has to die—

or, which comes to the same, we have to die to it. But *that* is only a *relative* dying which is just another name for the most real *living*; nor can any such use of a word ever disturb the great cardinal truth so plainly taught—namely, the actual dying of Christ for us, with this view, that we, in the same sense, might be *delivered from dying*.

So much at present for our Lord's own account of Himself as our Representative. We shall return to the subject when we come to consider the same character as it stands connected with—"THE SON OF MAN."

CHAPTER XX.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF CHRIST (CONTINUED).

COMING now to the teaching of the apostles on this subject, does it seem remarkable that—while they are continually referring to the Lord's death—they say so very little in regard to His earthly life? The reason must just be that, as the life, with His own view of it, had been so fully related already, they are content to leave that to speak for itself. The death, on the other hand, had all to be opened up; and this therefore becomes a principal part of their business. How that business is carried out let us now see.

Romans iii. 24. "Being justified freely by His grace." Here is *one*—shall we say the prime lesson—of this epistle? And how thus justified? "Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And how comes the redemption? "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood." Thus we are distinctly taught that justification comes through faith in the *blood* of Christ. Shall we, then, take this statement as it stands—accepting that blood as the thing which we are to have faith in for our justification? Or shall we say that the blood only expresses the entire course of His life—on the principle of the part being put for the whole—the finishing scene for

the entire drama? And where shall we find the warrant for introducing such rhetorical figures into a statement so solemn and precise—a statement so expressly setting before us the entire ground of our standing before God? Are we told that, otherwise, justification would be incomplete—amounting only to the removal of guilt, without any actual imputation of righteousness—a thing as essential as the other? So we may think; but what did the apostle think? That is a more important question, and one very easy to answer, if we will only leave theory and theology outside, and consent to go in and confer with him. For certainly he seems not to have seen the distinction that evangelical orthodoxy has made so much of; but, on the contrary, to have firmly rested in this, that the not-imputing of sin and the imputing of righteousness are entirely equivalent. (Chap. iv. 5–8.) But how equivalent? I am asked; would not a sinner, if simply pardoned, be merely saved from punishment, without thereby receiving any title to life? Impossible, I answer—for the punishment *is death*—and to be saved from that is to obtain the corresponding *life*, with whatever of title can precede, or of dignity can follow. And what difficulty can there be in this? The justification comes through the blood—*i.e.*, the life-giving of Emmanuel. The whole virtue of the life is in that shed blood. And if that life, through my faith, becomes the ransom of my soul, then what less is my plea to an actual life everlasting than just the whole virtue and value of that soul-ransoming life-blood of His? Is this, then, so inadequate for the purpose of a full justification, with all possible title to life eternal, that we need to feign, or argue out, some other element to supplement it

—an element which certainly is nowhere *expressed* either by our Lord or His apostles? And are we told in favour of this new element that the real justifying virtue of the “blood” depends upon the ‘obediential’ character which certainly belonged to the Redeemer’s sufferings? But what again is this but saying that we will not accept (for this great purpose) of the precious life-giving *as such*—but will, in spite of the value always directly *ascribed to that*, prefer to rest its real virtue upon a certain moral element combined with it? And is not this too like some of those very theories that would be most loudly denounced just by those on whom we are now reflecting? Would that orthodoxy might even now—for its own sake, but still more for the sake of that truth which it has misconceived—consent to make less of human ‘Confessions,’ and more of the divine Scriptures!

So much for justification as the apostle here represents it. It seems plain enough; but, if there be any obscurity about it, what follows should help us—“Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” (iv. 25.) Now here we have the death, *with* (as it might seem) *something more*. And yet that something is not the life which preceded, but the resurrection which followed—“He was delivered for our offences”—than which nothing could more decisively exhibit the “putting away of sin.” For what remained for the resurrection to do but just to give a full expression to that which had been done already? It was the Father’s announcement to the world how fully He accepted the great offering which had so lately been presented. It stood in the same relation to the

death which preceded as the seal does to the deed—the written discharge to the accepted payment. Thus was the dead Saviour raised for our justification. Thus to believe in Him as so raised is not to believe in His blood *and something else*—but just to believe in that as exhibited in all the perfection of its virtue.

In the following chapter we have “Christ dying for the ungodly,” “dying for sinners”—and that in the very same sense in which one man will ‘hardly’ or ‘per-adventure’ die for another. Thus “we are justified by His blood;” “we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son;” and “being justified shall be saved from wrath through Him.” (v. 6–10.)

Up to this point all is clear. And so, when we read in the first verse of this chapter of “being justified by faith,” it does not seem as if the copious context, whether before or after, permitted any other view of the faith than as being in *the blood of Christ*—always combining with this its true complement, the resurrection.

It is hard to suppose, then, that any view really differing from this is given in the important, however difficult, passage which follows, in regard to the first and second ‘Adam.’ Certainly, if that view of the Saviour’s representative character to which we object can be found anywhere, it is here. Or if any passage can prove that justification comes to us, not simply through the death and resurrection, but through a general life-obedience undergone by our Lord, whether as our actual substitute or virtual representative, it is this. And yet, in regard to each of these points, it really seems that, just as might have been expected, there is nothing taught here which had not been ex-

pressly taught previously. It is only the illustration and development that are different. For just look at the teaching so far as it concerns us now. There is the first Adam bringing, by his offence or disobedience, condemnation and death; and there is the second Adam bringing, by His obedience, justification and life. Now there is certainly a very perfect counterpart between condemnation and justification, death and life, respectively. Why should there not be the same, then, between disobedience and obedience? Why should the one be a single act or offence, and the other a course of obedience extending over three and thirty years? How would this tend to magnify the virtue of the obedience as contrasted with the disobedience—if, while a single act of the one had wrought all the damage, it required such an extension and multiplication of the other to repair it? Take one of the statements which brings out the comparison with peculiar clearness—"As, through one offence, it came on all men to condemnation—so, through one *righteousness*, it came on all men to justification of life." (v. 18.) Thus, as will be allowed, the words should be rendered—simply reserving a correction in regard to the important word translated, '*righteousness*.' For this is not by any means the exact sense of the word employed. It is not so elsewhere; and least of all can it be so here, where the writer has in the previous verse used the proper word for '*righteousness*.' The expression now in question, according to the highest authority that can be given for the sense of a Greek word, should rather mean (no one English word can express it, but the nearest would be) '*rectification*' or '*adjustment*.'* That is to say, one act in the way of

* ἐπανόρθωμα ἀδικήματος; Aristotle, Eth. Nicom. v. 10. See

unsettlement had brought condemnation; one act in the way of 'adjustment' has brought 'justification.' And so in the sixteenth verse the same contrast would be expressed—"As the judgment—(proceeding) from one offence—was unto condemnation; so the free gift* is (gone forth) from many offences unto justification." And thus we escape what is certainly a mistake—namely, to take the word now rendered 'adjustment' as meaning 'justification' in verse 16, and 'righteousness' in verse 18; though, in reality, each of these ideas is expressed by its own proper term in the course of the passage.

Once more, to complete this part of the view—"As through one man's disobedience the many were *set down* as sinners, so through the obedience of One the many *shall be set down* as righteous." What the disobedience was we know. And what can we suppose the obedience to be—as coinciding with the 'adjustment' already spoken of—but just that great act of life-giving, or blood-shedding, to which in the preceding portion, and to which alone, the sinner's justification had been ascribed?—the same obedience spoken of where it is said, "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"—or, as in the much-abused passage, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God"—where, in spite of all human exposition, we are expressly informed that the great obedience was realized in "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

It is hardly possible to avoid comparing these statements with Tittmann and Trench, "Synonyms," and Alford, on the passage. For the meaning of the same word in ch. viii. 4, see a good note in Alford.

* The form of the word rendered 'free gift' like the terms for 'judgment,' 'condemnation,' 'adjustment,' suggests the idea of an *act as completed in its result.*

ments as to our justification with the kindred one in another epistle—"He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; *that we might be made* the righteousness of God in Him." The *making* of the sinless One *to be sin* (I speak now to those who profess evangelical principles) refers certainly to the atoning death, and to that alone. And this, it is said, took place *that we might be made* the righteousness of God in Him—which as certainly refers to justification, and that under the fullest and most intensive view that is anywhere given of it. Mark, it is no mere *addition* of one thing to another, or *parallel* between the two. It is the most distinct possible statement of a *means* and an *end*. It is a certain thing done, as in itself the one sufficient ground for the doing of another—Christ made SIN *that we might be made* RIGHTEOUSNESS. What less is this, then, than the most full justification through the simple sin-bearing? In what does the Apostle's statement differ from ours, but that *his* text is very much stronger than this or any human comment upon it?

What, then, was the use of that life-long obedience—if it was not to be reckoned over to us for justification? How can the object of it be distinguished from that of His death? The two, I answer, stand upon an entirely different footing. The *obedience* was an essential part of the *incarnation*. God could not become man without being a holy, an obedient man. Such moral qualities were just as much a part of *the humanity assumed* as hands and feet were. Whatever therefore was the object of the incarnation, there was required for the effecting of that a full life-obedience in Jesus. Nay, we may freely say—no obedience, no incarnation. And so, when we have explained the incar-

nation and its design, we have explained the obedience also. The same however cannot be said of the death. We cannot say—*no death, no incarnation*; but we can say—*no death, no redemption*. The truth is that while *incarnation* demanded and involved *obedience*—each of them seemed to put the most perfect negative on the very idea of *death*. Thus essentially different in their own character are these two—the life with its obedience, and the death with its sin-bearing. Thus differently does the Scripture represent them. And the same difference will theology note in them, in proportion to its harmony with the Book from which it professes to be derived.

So much for the righteousness or obedience which has come to counteract the disobedience of the first Adam. How, then, does man obtain the benefit of it? *By faith*—as the previous portion teaches. By receiving it—as we are told in the present portion. “Much more they which *receive* the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ.” And this, too, has its analogy, in regard to the death that has come through the one man. For, again, putting aside theology, new or old, let us venture to listen to the Scripture itself—“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men,”—but how, or by what peculiar channel?—“*For that all have sinned.*” As to the *mode of this sinning*, or the various *modifications* of it in the different divisions of mankind, we do not now enquire. Enough that the Apostle, who certainly knew what he meant, has, in the most definite manner, connected the universal, personal, sinning of men *as a co-factor with the first*

man's disobedience in the bringing of death upon all. The human race, in a word, by its own sinning (all questions apart *as to how*), has linked itself on to its original father through whom the evil came into the world. And thus we have all the correspondence that we could desire between the reign of sin and the reign of grace. But there is an important difference. The reign of grace is infinitely upon infinitely a greater thing than the reign of sin; because the eternal life of all the saved, as a good, infinitely exceeds the death of all the unsaved, as an evil;—yea, the eternal life of one single soul infinitely surmounts any amount of death to any multitude however great. There is this difference also—that, while “the many” arrayed under the first Adam “*have been* constituted sinners”—“the many” who belong to the second Adam “*shall be* constituted righteous.” This distinction must be of extreme weight in rightly estimating the Redeemer’s work, and does not at all harmonize with the theory that Christ, in offering up Himself, offered up mankind—thus obtaining at the same moment acceptance for Himself and for the race. And thus, again, we see that ‘the many’ of the first Adam are literally ‘all’ without distinction, inasmuch as all die—while ‘the many’ of the second Adam are the ‘all’ who have been designated as “receiving grace and righteousness”—and who are spoken of throughout the whole previous portion as justified, reconciled, saved.

Thus far the Apostle’s object has been, in these three chapters, to exhibit and illustrate how a sinner is ‘justified;’—and neither common usage, nor the scripture style, can give to the word, as here used, any other

sense than that of clearing from the charge of sin, acquitting, or pronouncing righteous. If there could be any reasonable ground for a question as to this, it would surely be removed by the very decisive contrasts with which these chapters present us. Thus 'justify,' as here used, is exactly the contrary of holding 'guilty' (iii. 19, 20, 24), and of 'imputing sin;' while it is the equivalent of 'forgiving sin,' 'covering sin,' or 'imputing righteousness' (iv. 5-8);—'justification,' in like manner, having for its opposite, 'condemnation' (v. 18). And such is that first of blessings which, as St. Paul declares to us, comes wholly and solely through the blood of Christ;—that blood, as expressing the real value of His death, being God's means of effecting the great propitiation. (*cf.* iii. 25; v. 6-9.) Thus through the clearing away of guilt—the 'imputing of righteousness'—or, in a word, by the 'one adjustment'—even the 'justifying blood,' is a sinner pardoned and constituted righteous. Thus has the Righteous One *died for* the guilty—actually died—truly given away for them His infinitely precious life—as God's one means for their justification. Thus do they, beholding Him as dying for them, see how they themselves are delivered from dying.

How natural, now, for man—being what he is—upon hearing all this to exclaim—'Good! Let us continue to sin, then, that this rich grace may have the more scope for its delightful work of justifying us.'—'Perish the thought'—says the Apostle—'for, already we have *died to sin*; how can we, then, for such a purpose or any other, live any longer therein?'—This argument he then pursues; and no one has ever shown what room there

could possibly have been for the licentious objection supposed on the one hand, or for this passionate rejection of it on the other—if the ‘justification’ already described had *meant* the renewal of the sin-loving heart, instead of (or even together with) the acquittal of the death-deserving soul.

I need not say how important this consideration is in our enquiry. But it is with another view that I now point out the connection. I wish to ask how any candid mind can allow itself to forget the difference between *dying for* and *dying to*? One man is said to *die for* sins, his own or his neighbour's. Another is said to *die to sin*. Now, who does not allow that the one expression signifies a *real dying*—while the other signifies something which, by a figure, is very properly described as a dying—but which, rightly understood, is not dying at all, but the most *real living*? Why, then, will we not understand that, when Christ died *for* our sins, He *really died*—and that, when we die *to* them, we *really live*? Why must we be constantly told that Christ died for our sins, *not* that we might *not* die for them, but that we *might* die, namely, *to them*—even as persons coming to hate them in common with Him? What homage to reason, or gain to truth, can it be thus continually to bandy about the most transparent fallacy of an ambiguous phrase, as if that could settle a dispute, or displace a doctrine so deeply rooted in the Bible as the substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus? For suppose that, in dying for our sins, His object was not only, in the first place, that He might save us from *dying for* them, but quite as much, or, if you will, a thousand times more, that He might bring us to *die to* them—yet how will our *dying to* them interfere with the sober meaning

of His *dying for* them—any more than His *dying for* can stand in the way of our *dying to*? Why may not the sin-purging offering of the Saviour be—if the Scripture says it is—in the strictest sense a dying sacrifice?—and yet the offering of the soul that is sin-purged and saved be, for the same reason, and with equal clearness, a ‘living sacrifice’? And why may not our apostle, after so distinctly presenting the one, as we have already seen, exhort—on the ground of it, as the crown of all God’s mercies—to present the other as our “reasonable service”? (Rom. xii. 1.)

It would be out of place to do more than glance very hastily at the remainder of this Epistle, the importance of which cannot be overrated. It may be regarded, indeed, considering the character and range of its matter, together with the company addressed, as the most really catholic of all the Epistles;—and here therefore, if anywhere, we should expect some trace of an idea which would certainly be the most catholic of all ideas—namely, such a representation of humanity by Christ as would involve the actual presenting and gaining acceptance for it before God. Do we then find that idea here? Just note the chief points in some of the remaining chapters, and then say.

In the sixth chapter we have the first view of the Christian man getting dominion over sin. And by what means? By being his own self spiritually buried and risen with Christ—according to the expressive figure of his baptism.

In the seventh chapter we are shown the struggles of a great Christian hero out of the bondage of his flesh into the liberty of the Spirit. And yet not a word of

any influence or power by which he was brought through—except, “Married to Him who is raised from the dead.”

In the eighth chapter we have almost everything ranging from the ‘no condemnation’ by being *in* Christ, up to perfect ‘conformity to His image.’ We have ‘sin condemned’ and ‘mortified;’ the ‘carnal mind’ cast down and the ‘spiritual mind’ set up. We have ‘adoption,’ ‘heirship,’ and ‘joint-heirship,’ with the Spirit’s ‘leading’ and ‘pleading;’—we have at once God’s children and the general creation “groaning and travailing,” each in the hope of their appropriate deliverance. We have Christ dying, rising, and interceding—and God calling, justifying, and freely giving all things. But what of the representing and presenting of entire humanity—whether in the life or death of the Saviour? Nothing, absolutely nothing—unless it be thought fit to rest a burden so heavy upon the declaration—that “God sent forth His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh!”

The ninth chapter treats of the election of man. But the view is of the separation, not the gathering into one, of humanity—much less the presenting of it as a single offering in the person of a Representative.

The tenth chapter tells us about the Saviour’s death and resurrection, and the unspeakable blessing of very simply believing in that.

The eleventh chapter represents humanity once more in a divided state;—the separation, this time, being betwixt unbelieving Jews as cast off, and believing Gentiles as taken in. But, strange to say, it is Abraham, not Christ, that is held up as the life-root of the Jews—and, stranger still, it is through an engrafting into this old olive tree that the Gentiles obtain their

reconciliation—while the blessing still in store for Israel is suspended upon this, that “God is able to graff them in again.”

In the twelfth chapter we have ‘one body’ with its many members and their various functions. But that one body is neither more nor less than the company of believing men.

Passing now to the *next Epistle*, and looking out for anything that could be taken as a proof of the representative character of Christ, we come upon an expression which we are afraid has been so applied. “The head of every man is Christ.” (1 Cor. xi. 3.) It should not be needful to say more than that the only idea here conveyed is, that Christ is the one true Head of men as regards authority—not the Representative—and even that not of *humanity* at all, but of the *man* as distinguished from the *woman*. It need hardly be added that the Apostle happens to be speaking with a still further restriction, of the Christian man.

This leads us to the great passage upon the Resurrection in the same Epistle—“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order—Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.” (1 Cor. xv. 20–23.)

Now in the first place, it is as clear as possible that the whole passage treats of the resurrection of believers. “They that are Christ’s” are the only party alluded to; and the only resurrection spoken of con-

sists in the putting on of a spiritual and glorious body. Thus it is not possible to regard Christ here as the *Representative of humanity*. May we not then regard Him as in any respect the Representative of His *Church*? We may—so that we understand in what respect we mean it. To assist us in this we may suppose the chief of a nation to cross the sea and take possession of a new shore in the name of his people, all of whom are to follow in due time. This of course he does not do *in their stead*—because His coming is designed to prepare for their coming, not to take the place of it. It is in another way that he chiefly represents them—namely, by showing in his own person what sort of people they are, and what sort of thing they are to do. ‘From me learn mine,’ is the principal meaning of his act. And yet there is a sense in which he goes beyond this. In so far as it is unsuitable for the others to come personally at that season or stage of the affair, he really does appear *in their stead*. Thus, though in a very mixed sense, might such a one be said to represent his people. And so in a similar sort of way may our rising Lord be said to represent *His*. He shows, in rising, how they are to rise; and in their name and stead He secures for them the privilege. He rises, in short, as their Archetype or Prototype—and in this sense as their Representative. The Apostle has expressed the whole in the words—“The firstfruits of them that sleep.” Now the firstfruits do represent the expected harvest,—not as coming instead of it, but as a sample and an earnest of it. And thus we are to regard our Lord in His resurrection. But how differently in His death!

For now the notable circumstance is that there are

two things, and no more, which Christ is said to do *for us*. He is not said to live for us, or obey for us, or rise again for us—but only to *die for us* and to *intercede for us*.*

And thus we can very easily meet the assertion—“He no more died that we might not die, than He rose that we might not rise.” For the statement that would be untrue is, we find, *not made*; and therefore we are the more free to accept the one that *is made* in the only sense which we are able to find for it. Nor can any one compare the free way in which our Lord is said to *die for us* with the cautious way in which He is never said to *rise for us*—without feeling that there must be an important reason for the difference. Each event was, of course, on our behalf, and for our salvation; and yet the ‘for’ which seems almost a part of the ‘dying’ is, for some reason, carefully dissociated from the ‘rising.’ In regard to the interceding, it is enough to say that—while, of course, He does not *pray for us*, in order that we may *not* pray for ourselves, but rather that we may—still it is clear that His praying *is instead of ours, in so far* as it effects that which could be effected by no praying of our own. To this extent He certainly does put us aside, and intercedes, not only on our *behalf*, as a friend may do for a friend, but literally *in our stead*, as sometimes even man may have to do for man. Such, surely, is the character of our High Priest’s intercession. Has He not gone up and made a personal appearance before God for us—with the express view of prosecuting the work of Advocate

* There is the single case 2 Cor. v. 15 (“Who for us died and rose again”) which if standing alone might be regarded as ambiguous—but which with so many cases to rule the usage presents no difficulty. See pp. 233-4 above.

with the Father—and this actually *instead of our own* going up, to appear and plead for ourselves? And thus we can see how no advocate in an earthly court, no administrator of the affairs of an absent party, ever more completely represented the other party than the great Intercessor now represents us.

As regards the resurrection, there is still one point which deserves our attention in passing—and that is the action of our Lord as connected with the rising of the wicked. Here there might seem a difficulty. For does it not appear as if He were in some sense, by His own resurrection, *their* Representative also? No, in no sense at all. He rises as the “first-fruits” of the harvest—as representing all God’s wheat, not the world’s chaff, or the devil’s tares. He, as the Head, rises to life; and all whom He raises as His members He raises to a life immortal as His own. Thus it shall be with all “who are Christ’s at His coming”—and all “who are found written in the book of life,” at the end. It must be on some other ground, then, that the great company of “those that have done evil shall hear His voice, and come forth to the resurrection of *judgment*.” (John v. 29.) What that ground is we may discover without difficulty. The Saviour Himself has told us. Such a resurrection is wholly an evil, and in no sense a good, to those raised—and is accomplished simply in the course of judgment. His account of it is this—“For, as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Here the Son represents the Father, in so far as He Himself becomes the immediate Agent in raising and quickening; and He, at the same time, represents those whom He

raises and quickens, in so far as He Himself was raised and quickened as their Head. Having declared His action in regard to resurrection, He thus continues: "For neither doth the Father *judge* any man, but hath committed all *judgment* to the Son." (John v. 21, 22.) The raising and the judging are two separate things—the latter being in this passage most certainly restricted to the wicked. In each of the two things the Son represents the Father by whom He is deputed to the work. In the one only does He, in any sense, represent those on whom He acts. They are the members of His body; how fit, then, that He as their Head should raise them! They are the harvest; how fit that He as the first-fruits should introduce them! They are His quickened ones already; how fit that He should quicken them again! They have been sleeping in Him; how fit that He should awake them now! It is His own Bride; how fit that He should adorn her with her immortal robe! In one word, "They are Christ's;" how, then, can Christ, at His appearing, appear without His own? As to the other, the case is altogether different. They are simply children of Adam. Born in him, they have lived in him, and died in him. But their existence is not yet over; they have to be judged, and punished. In order to this they too must "come forth." The *man*—not the soul only, but the entire man that sinned, must be sentenced and suffer. Nothing can be more righteous. But the resurrection with them is only a step to judgment. And who shall be their Judge? Who but THE SON OF MAN? To whom else should "the Father give authority to execute *judgment also*"?—and for what reason, but just *because He is the Son of man*? Who so worthy to be thus exalted as He who so

humbled Himself? Who can show an acquaintance and experience of mankind like His who “dwelt among us,” and “died for us”? However terrible the retribution, there must ever be an equity and sympathy unrivalled in a Judge like this. And how fit that—after having been in so many ways, and for so many ages, judged by man—man should at last be judged by Him!

So much for our Lord's representative character as connected with the resurrection. We need add nothing in this place as to the very expressive title, “the Second Man”—having already learned what it points to from the passage regarding the two Adams (Romans v. 12–21); and having still to consider the import of the kindred title—“THE SON OF MAN.”

CHAPTER XXI.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF CHRIST (CONTINUED),
WITH ALLEGED RESULTS OF IT.

THERE is still another view of the representative character of Christ, and a very remarkable one, which we must not overlook. It will be found in a passage quoted above (page 161). Certain things, it will be observed, are there specified which, it is said, "*are* the atonement and redemption of men." To this statement we shall attend, after considering the ground that is laid down for it. That ground consists simply in the relation supposed to exist between the Son of God and the human race as exhibited in CREATION. Here is the account of it—"Because He is what He is, and because men are related to Him *as by God's creation they are related to Him.*" And "this view is expanded to a universal scope in all the Pauline Epistles." "The *ground of atonement* is the mystery of *creation or constitution* in Christ;" and this "St. Paul states whenever he is setting forth broadly the message of atonement through the cross."*

One wonders, in reading such a statement, where "in all the Pauline Epistles" such things are to be found.

* J. Ll. Davies—"Remarks on Jowett's Commentary on St. Paul," p. 76.

And how seldom it must be that St. Paul "sets forth broadly the message of atonement through the cross"—if it is only when "he states as the ground of it the mystery of *creation or constitution* in Christ." It is not possible, surely, that these two last expressions can be meant *alternatively*; they must be taken as *coincident*. It is true indeed, that, if coincident, the ground of reference to St. Paul becomes so very narrow that one is tempted to ask whether the writer does not mean to take the two things alternatively. But then again such an idea is at once negatived by the statement preceding in regard to the "relationship" as being simply through "creation;" and thus we see that the "constitution" spoken of can only be a circumstance meant as coincident with "creation." This being so, what shall we find "in all the Pauline Epistles" of what is, with such strange confidence, alleged?

The Epistle to the Romans, for example, contains some very plain statements of "atonement through the cross;" but what about the alleged 'ground' of it? In the former portion of the Epistle—not a word. Then comes the parallel between the two Adams—and yet even that only as illustrative of Christ's work—not as the 'ground of atonement.' Here, indeed, if anywhere, we do have a view of the 'constitution' of 'the new covenant;' but of 'creation'—the 'creation of man'—not a trace; nor of the relation of mankind to Christ, on account of that. In the next Epistle we have some very plain references to 'atonement as through the cross;' but what of 'creation' as the 'ground' of it? Again (chap. xv.) we have the two Adams—but of 'creation' still not a word, unless it be of the 'new creation;' and as to 'constitution,' we have simply that

which has been noticed already—namely, the union between “Christ the first-fruits,” and “them that are Christ’s.”

In the succeeding Epistle (2 Cor. v.) we have some still more explicit statements of “atonement through the cross”—but where shall we find one about any ‘creation’ or ‘constitution’—unless it be, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature”?

So, in writing to the Galatians, St. Paul speaks of the ‘cross’ and of ‘atonement;’ but, instead of ‘creation’ by the Son of God, we get only the startling contrast of that glorious One being “made of a woman.” The Thessalonians, too, are reminded that “Christ died for us”—that “He rose again”—and that thus we are “delivered from the wrath to come.” (1 Thess. iv. 14; i. 10.) As to ‘creation,’ they are told nothing. Timothy also is told distinctly of Atonement and Incarnation (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; iii. 16)—of ‘creation’ nothing. And, if I may allude to the Epistle to the Hebrews which contains more about atonement than any other—there we do indeed find something of ‘creation;’ but it is the creation of “the earth” and “the heavens,” not of man (chap. i.)—while ‘the ground of the atonement’ is very plainly represented as being the necessity, in order to the remission of sin, of such a sacrifice as only the Incarnation could furnish. (ii.; ix.; x.)

So hard is it to find that which we are told is so prominent “in all the Pauline Epistles”—so much so, indeed, that (putting aside the one to the Hebrews) we can find in only two of them anything that might even be mistaken for what is alleged as common to them all; and that is, not the ‘creation of man,’ but of “all things”

through Christ, or by Him. (Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16.) But that this is the "ground of atonement by the cross" St. Paul does not seem to imagine. As to any peculiar 'creation' of man, we find again the familiar idea of the new creation, and that alone (Eph. ii. 10; iv. 24; Col. iii. 10.) As to 'Headship,' we have that also with peculiar impressiveness; but it is of the Church; that is the only Body ascribed to Christ there. (Eph. v. 29; Col. i. 24.) Human teachers, indeed, may tell us that, as members of the human family, we are all members of Christ; they may loudly assert, and may wonder much at our slowness of conviction, that the title "Son of man" does not and cannot signify less than this. But so long as 'church' does not mean 'world,' but a company called and gathered out of it—so long will it be impossible to believe both these teachers and the Bible. For if anything can be plain in these two Epistles, it is just the separation of the Church, as a saved company, out of a world that must perish—except as its people repent, and seek salvation in the Head of that despised but ransomed company. And thus—whether we understand or not what the Apostle means by saying that God is now "summing up all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and on earth" (Eph. i. 10)—one thing is as plain as it would have been possible for him to make it, namely—on the one hand, the separating from the world of those who "are saved by grace through faith," and the coming, on the other hand, of "the wrath of God on the children of disobedience." (Eph. ii. 8; v. 6.)

So much for that view of the 'creation of man' and his consequent relation to the Son of God, as 'the ground of atonement.' An apology may seem wanted

for saying so much about what may perhaps be regarded as only a random sentiment of an individual mind. But such sentiments are so common in the writers of this class, and so characteristic of their general style of assertion and argument *in this department*, that the statement now considered is well worthy of attention, not only for its own sake, but as a sample of much besides.

Such being "the ground of atonement by the cross," we examine next what sort of atonement is said to rest upon that ground.

The following is the statement of that which comes in connection with the passage just reviewed. It is one, I need hardly say, which would not be objected to by any of the writers of the same class—"The incarnation of such a Person as the Eternal Son of God—His being tried as we are, yet without sin, and therefore bearing all our sins—His victory over evil and the evil spirit—His yielding to death and triumphing over it—His absolute doing of the Father's will—His offering Himself without spot to God—*are* the atonement and redemption of men."

After what has been said above, it is not needful to add anything in regard to 'Incarnation;' especially as that seems to be introduced here for the very proper object of showing the real value and bearing of those actings which are represented as constituting the atonement. And what are these? They are all, as we shall find, such as are referred to (for whatever purpose) in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Let us mark here whether the purpose be the same. (1) "His being tried as we are, yet without sin, and *therefore* bearing *all our sins*."

But why '*therefore*'? Does the Scripture say so? Does it ever connect these two things in such a way, or in any way? It says that, because He was tried as we are, *therefore* "He is able to succour those that are tempted" (Heb. ii. 18);—*therefore* "He is able to sympathize with our infirmities." (iv. 15.) And it says also that, because He had no sin of His *own* to atone for, *therefore* He was free to give Himself entirely to the work of bearing ours—being just such a High Priest as was needed for our case. (vii. 26, 27; x. 11, 12.) But it never says—no never—that the sharing of the sinless One in our trials *was the bearing by Him of our sins*. No, for "infirmities" and "sicknesses" (Matt. viii. 17) are not 'sins.' Such language may have become the language of poetry, of novels, of sermons. But it is certainly not the language of God's Word. And it is cruel for theology to take it up, and pronounce it with an air of authority as if it had only to be declared and accepted. The bearing of sin, as we have seen already—keeping, of course, to undisputed cases, and without any of that melancholy begging of questions which is too commonly relied on for settling all disputes—means something very different from this. Nothing, in short, is less sentimental, and more thoroughly judicial, than the 'bearing of sin' in Scripture. So far, indeed, as a mere animal had to do with it in the way of sacrifice, it knew nothing and felt nothing about the matter, having simply to die, no more and no less. So far as it was the act of a man, he knew and felt that he stood in the position of one who had committed the sin, and must therefore bear the consequence—which, we need hardly say, is commonly, in such cases, represented as being 'death.' And this being so, it is nothing less than a new revelation to

tell us that Christ's "being tried as we are" was *the* "bearing of *all* our sins."—The bearing of *all* our sins! Then surely that was *the* atonement; and what more either of divine arrangement, or of explanation is wanted? And yet it is characteristic of these writers that they cannot venture to tell us in a few words what they really understand by 'atonement,' but must be ever heaping circumstance upon circumstance—striving, as it were, to make up for some felt defect, and to supply by quantity what is wanting in the quality of their statement. And thus, after being already told all that we should need to know, if only it were true, we have (2) "His victory over evil and the evil spirit." That is to say, He refused to listen to the wildest arguments of the Tempter; He stood unmoved before the tempest of his rage; He went about emancipating his slaves; and He finished by declaring, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out." In one word, He bruised, even upon His cross, the serpent's head. But was that *the* Atonement, or any part of it? I shall believe it when the Bible declares it; but not so long as it teaches me that the Atonement—yes, and the whole of it too—was accomplished in one single thing which is not this. Meanwhile, I can well understand how Christ—atonement for sin by His own sin-bearing, abolishing death by His own dying—destroys him that had the power of death, and wrests the miserable captives from him by casting out both the love of sin and the fear of death from them. And now comes another article, (3) "His yielding to death and triumphing over it." But why such an enveloping with a cloud of circumstance that which in Scripture stands peerless as *the* one sacrifice for sin?

Anything may be spoilt by an admixture of even the best thing ; and the ' atonement ' is no exception. The glory of any crown is extinguished, by giving associates of a certain sort to the prince ; and the glory of the cross is gone, as soon as any other circumstance is set up to share in its achievement. No, this is neither apostolic truth nor style ; this is not, must I say it, Christian faith. " His *yielding* to death ! " But did He only yield to it ? Is this how the Scripture asks us to regard it ? If, in a passage or two, it happens from the nature of the case, to fall into this style of representation (I can remember just now only certain expressions in Isaiah liii),* is it fair to set up such as *the* Scriptural view—in a passage too of which the express purpose is to tell what the Atonement means ? It says little, surely, for the system which needs such an exposition. And yet, this is just too characteristic of the system—as where the same writer says, " Such a manifestation as His yielding Himself to a hated death for our sake is a power of atonement which ought to be irresistible." Certainly it should, if it was simply a power over our feelings that was wanted. But then it is a very different view that the Scripture presents when it makes everything to depend upon the simple fact of His ' dying for us,' ' dying for our sins,' ' giving His life, Himself for us. '†

* In Phil. ii. 8, it might, if it served any good purpose, be regarded as the very *object* of His incarnation, that He should " submit to death, even the death of the cross."

† These writers are not always satisfied with even such diluted statements of the Saviour's death. They would seem at times almost to have forgotten how He said—" No man taketh it from Me ; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Thus writes one of the most distinguished of them—" Christ was a victim of the world's sin Intolerance, formalism, scepticism, hatred

And yet even such a statement, attenuated as it is, must have its strength still further impaired by combination with another article. The "yielding to death" shall only be allowed to furnish its quota towards the sum of the great Atonement, after the addition, "and triumphing over it." Take this as equivalent to 'rising again' (though certainly the simple and more usual expression would have been preferable)—still one must ask, Is it true? Is the resurrection a part of the atonement? That it is a material ground in the matter of our *justification* we have already seen. But, as to *atonement*, the Scripture surely, in places too many to be now quoted, regards that as among the things that were "finished" when the Saviour *died*. (4) "His absolute doing of His Father's will"—If it had been said, His 'special,' His 'peculiar' doing of the Father's will—His *so* doing it as none ever did it, before or since, in heaven or earth; and as no other, to eternity, ever can do it—His doing it, by offering Himself for our sins, as explained in the well-known passage, (Heb. x. 9–14)—if this had been said, then it would have been the truth; but it would have been superfluous, after the preceding article of the 'death,' and not in good keeping with an express statement of the meaning of 'atonement.' (5) "His offering Himself without spot to God." Whether this be meant for a separate article, it would not be easy to tell, nor does it much matter; for it is plainly intended to represent by it the entire consecration, in life or death, of Christ to His Father. But surely it is one of the first rules of honesty to understand our neighbour's language as he himself understands it. He may be

of goodness, were the foes which crushed Him." (F. W. Robertson. Sermon vii. Second Series.)

using his words very badly ; still we decline either to praise or to blame a man, either to believe him or the contrary, for anything that *he* has *said*, in any other sense than *as* he means it. And everybody knows that Scripture never speaks of a victim being offered without spot, except with direct reference to the *single circumstance of its death*. Nor is that all. Had it been so, then men might have ventured, however unreasonably, to regard the *death* of a spotless lamb as typifying the spotless *life* of Jesus. But such venturing is worse than unreasonable, when we find that the Scripture never employs the language in question in any other sense or connection, than with reference to that single event which is now so strangely misrepresented—"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, in order to the serving of the Living God?" (Heb. ix. 14.)

There is another statement on this subject formerly quoted from the same author worthy of attention here—"He shared our sin, in the sense of it, in sorrow for it, in a vicarious confession of it, in *the miserable consequences* of it, that we might be reconciled through such a loving Saviour to our Father."

It is with the last of these points that we are at present concerned—the strange admission, "Shared in the *miserable consequences* of our sin." Now, of course, the real sum and meaning of sin's consequences is *death*;—"The wages of sin is death." And of all things relating to the Saviour the most marked is His *death*. And so He shared in sin's 'consequences,' the chief of which—because its real desert—is death; and not only 'shared' in it (that is not the Scriptural idea), but ex-

pressly came to die, and deliberately gave Himself up to that. And yet, undeniable as are these facts and their connection, it shall on no account be allowed that He gave Himself to the death *as really being the consequence or desert of sin*. Other minor evils, it can be admitted, He underwent as being "*the consequences of sin*;" because, having identified Himself with men, and entertaining a perfect sympathy with them in all their sufferings, He could not but undergo much evil—whether in the way of bodily pain, or of mental distress—as the unavoidable result of their sin. And yet, while death is really *the consequence of sin*, still it can never be allowed that He underwent *that as a consequence* at all. There must always be found some other reason for His dying—as, for example, "the surrender of His own will," or the importance of attracting us to the great "duty of self-sacrifice."—Is it, then, we may well ask, is it of such material as this, that truth is composed? Or rather, is not such melancholy incoherence the sure indication of the most deadly error?

One passage more will bring out this last view with sufficient distinctness and brevity—"It is true that Christ died for us, in that we present His sacrifice as ours" [*i.e.* aiming to offer a similar one]. "The value of the death of Christ consisted in the surrender of self-will." *

This is certainly a bold assertion. I refer peculiarly to the last sentence—very important if true; very pernicious if false. How, then, does any one know that it is this which constitutes the value of the Saviour's

* F. W. Robertson as above.

death? It is by no means self-evident; and the Scripture, as Christians have generally thought, puts the matter in a very different light. There is, indeed, that passage about the doing of the divine will, in its appointment of the great Sacrifice (Heb. x.), which needs only to be referred to. But that can never show that the surrender to the will which appointed the sacrifice forms the chief value of the death which the sacrifice involved. All essential as that surrender was, the chief value of the death may still be *in itself*. Or, take the word in the garden—"Not my will, but Thine be done." Here, again, when the Sufferer shrinks from the cup, and desires, if possible, its withdrawal—still after all He surrenders His own will; and the value of the surrender cannot be overrated. But, surely, the drinking of the cup was important as well as the surrender to the will which prescribed it—and possibly more important as regards the value of the death. The truth is just this—the Father's will prescribes the cup, and the Son's will submits to the prescription. Is it quite reasonable, then, to make so little of the requirement itself, and so much of the surrendering to it? What if, on the one hand, the drinking of the cup be the element *which constitutes the real value of the death*—and the Son's submission, on the other, be that temper of mind which renders Him personally so acceptable in the presentation of His offering! Such a view would not surely be unreasonable. And it may fairly be presumed that the *will to be done* was not less important than the *will to do it*. There are cases, of course, when the will to render an offering constitutes its 'chief value,' but there are cases when it is far otherwise. Thus, when Abraham laid Isaac on the altar, the great

thing, practically viewed, was the surrender of his own will. When the young man refused to sell all, the great thing was the refusal to surrender his will. When Moses asked to be blotted out of the book that Israel might be spared, the same may be said of that. But if the death of Moses had procured the life of 600,000 of his people the case would have been greatly changed. When Paul went about the world preaching Christ, there was a noble surrender of self-will. But you cannot say that the chief value of his preaching lay in that, rather than in the Christ that was preached and the souls that were saved by the preaching. So if a man had the means of ransoming from a miserable bondage a million of captives, whose lives were of the utmost importance to the world, and nothing but his will stood in the way—the surrender of that will would certainly be a very noble thing. But on what ground can it be pronounced that that would constitute the ‘chief value’ of the deed? So here is a great end to be achieved—a world’s redemption through the sacrifice of the life of God’s Son—and the divine will has appointed the sacrifice—and the Saviour’s will freely and completely surrenders to it. Is it thoughtful, then—is it reasonable—is it reverential thus to forget the appointed sacrifice, and the appointed end, and the appointing will, and to think only of the will thus surrendered—and to insist upon that as the ‘chief value’ of the Saviour’s death, and, in fact, as constituting almost, if not something more, the very essence and substance of the Gospel? Such surely is a mistake. And, on the other hand, the truth must lie in this, that the ‘surrendering will’ of the Redeemer was the grand preliminary to that death whose ‘chief value’ consisted in its

being the 'surrender' of His LIFE "as a ransom for many."*

* There is one author whose view of the "self-sacrifice of God" is worth noting here. It is this, I think, that would be most likely to carry me away, if I could consent to give up, for the splendid dream, the still grander truth of the One "giving His life as a ransom for many." The following sentences, will suffice to present the view. (See Bushnell's "New Life," ch. xvii.)

"In this view it is that Christ crucified is the power of God. It is because He shows God in self-sacrifice, because He brings out and makes historical in the world God's passive virtue, which is, in fact, the culminating head of power in His character. . . . All the figures of cleansing, sprinkling, washing, healing, purging, terminate in the same thing, the new creating efficacy of Christ the power of God. It is the power of character, feeling, a right passivity, a culminating grace of sacrifice in God. . . . In this passion of Jesus it must be enough that I look on the travail of a divine feeling, and behold the spectacle of God in sacrifice. This I see and nothing less. He is visibly not a man. His character is not of this world. I feel a divinity in Him. He floods me with a sense of God, such as I receive not from all God's works and worlds beside. And when I stand by His cross, when I look on that strong passion, and shudder with the shuddering earth, and darken with the darkening sun, enough that I can say, 'My Lord and my God!' I ask no sanction of the head; I want no logical endorsement; enough that I can see the heart of God, and in all this wondrous passion know Him as enduring the contradiction of sinners. No matter if I cannot reason the mystery; no matter if the whole transaction is a doing of the impossible when so plainly the impossible is done!—when I have the irresistible verdict in me self-pronounced! Why should I debate the matter in my head when I have the God of sacrifice in my heart? I will give up my sins. He that endures me so, subdues me, and I yield. O Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world!—what Thou didst bear in Thy blessed hands and feet I cannot bear. Take it all away. Hide me in the depths of Thy suffering love—mould me to the image of Thy divine passion! . . . Oh these great possibilities! this sorrowing love! this enduring patience that bears the sins of the world! He that groans in the agony, He that thirsts on the cross, this is the real and true—the Lord He is the God! the Lord He is the God! The God of mere amplitude will do to amuse the fancy of the ingenious—the God of sacrifice only can approve Him—

self to a sinner. . . . Our gospel is not any mere appeal of gratitude, or newly-impressed obligation, drawing the soul to God by the consideration of what He has done in the cross, to purchase a free remission. Bonds of gratitude, alas! have never been so great a power on human souls. And how does it appear that any such bond has been even admitted, when as yet the remission itself is rejected, and the want of it unfelt? No; this power, this wonderful power, is God in sacrifice. It is measured, and expressed, and incorporated in the historic life of the world as a power new-creative in the passion of Jesus, the incarnate Word of God; for it is here that God pours out into the world's bosom His otherwise transcendent perfections, and opens, even to sight, the otherwise inaccessible glories of His love It can do for you, O sinner of mankind, all that you want done. It can regenerate your habits, settle your disorders, glorify your baseness, and assimilate you perfectly to God. This it will do for you. Go to the cross, and meet there God in sacrifice. Behold Him, as Jesus, bearing your sin, receiving the shafts of your enmity! Embrace Him, believe in Him, take Him to your inmost heart. Do this, and you shall feel sin die within you; and a glorious quickening—Christ the power of God, Christ in you the hope of glory—shall be consciously risen upon you, as the morn of your new creation.”—Now all this is very grand, and has in it a precious side of truth. But as an account of the great fact of Christ's “bearing our sins”—that is to say, of God's way of pardoning and accepting sinners—is it a human dream or the divine Gospel?

CHAPTER XXII.

ATONEMENT BY CONFESSION.

HERE is a view that has been very plausibly put forward of late, and very favourably received. As to devoutness it certainly yields to none of the other views that we have examined. Let us consider what are its claims to our reasonable regard.

Besides the passage towards the close of the last chapter, we find the same writer saying,* “The Father could not be satisfied without such a confession of human sin, such a sorrow for it, as the Son adequately offered to the Father, that men, His brethren, might share it in their weakness with Him.”

This again is hard to understand. But, so far as we can take it up, it seems something like an admission of the much hated principle—that, *under some aspect*, and for some purpose, suffering may be an acceptable offering to God—may be necessary before the Father can be satisfied. How the writer of the words can be regarded as teaching less than this, I cannot understand. And yet to admit as much would be to surrender his whole position.

But the chief promoter and expounder of this theory of ‘confession’ is Dr. J. M. Campbell, whose view has

* J. Ll. Davies—“Tracts for Priests and People,” xiii. p. 50.

been given above. He teaches, as we there saw (chap. x.), that Christ's suffering had nothing, and could have nothing, of punishment in it—*because* it is "a divine experience in humanity." What this precisely means may not be very clear; but it is argued in pursuance of it that He, "being by love identified with us, necessarily came under all our burdens, especially sin." This, of course, we allow—though we may considerably differ from the author as to the full bearing of the statement—and though we should certainly have supposed that to be 'identified with us in coming under the burden of sin' meant, above all things, *to come under that penal death*, which is just *the great burden* which sin brings upon us. And how could we have doubted that such was really the purport of the author's admission, when we found him going on to say—"The wrath of God against sin is a reality," "nor is the idea of satisfaction to divine justice a delusion"—Christ has "dealt with this wrath," as was incumbent, and has "accorded to it that which was its due," thus yielding "satisfaction to justice, and meeting its righteous demand"?

Such is, perhaps, the most distinct instance of the acceptance of evangelical terms in any of those writers. Let us see how he understands his own admissions. There is, he argues, a twofold action of Christ as Mediator. (1) He deals *with man for God*. In this capacity He exhibits a perfect zeal for the Father's honour—"a perfect sympathy in the condemnation of sin by Him who is love;"—all this being presented in the life, and perfected in the death of Christ—the *cost* of such a *testimony for God* in such a world as this *fully answering* to the idea of His being a "sacrifice for sin." "The idea"—what idea, I ask? There is the poetical idea of

a 'sacrifice,' and the popular idea, differing or agreeing with that, as may be. But there is also the Scriptural idea. And, according to that, I find two sorts of sacrifice—the living sacrifice and the dying sacrifice. The living sacrifice is the happy employment of life for God; the dying sacrifice is the giving, or taking it away on account of sin. But a sacrifice which *consists in* the 'cost' entailed by faithfulness to God in this evil world I find not in Scripture. And, above all, to say that such 'cost' *fully answers to the idea* of a 'sacrifice for sin' is to use an extraordinary liberty with language so sacred. Yet, think as we may of the liberty thus taken with 'sacrifice,' in this surely must the real atonement be allowed to consist—namely, in the blessed fact of Christ's "being a sacrifice for sin." But no—the whole business of atonement is yet to come! Christ in dealing with man for God has offered the "sacrifice for sin"—but not the *atonement*. For (2) it is only in His dealing *with God for man* that that, according to our author, takes place. For now, that mind in Christ which, as towards man, was the perfect *condemnation* of sin, would be, as towards God, a perfect *confession* of it, a perfect Amen in humanity to God's wrath and judgment against it. He who was THE TRUTH could not be in humanity and not say, 'Righteous art Thou, O Lord, because Thou hast judged thus.' Thus Christ realized and appropriated the wrath of God as well as the sin of man—took it into the bosom of the divine humanity—perfectly responded to it, and, by so doing, absorbed it. For that response was equivalent to a perfect repentance, a perfect contrition for all the sins of men. And thus the wrath of God is rightly met, and His justice fully satisfied.

Let us look a little into this very peculiar view—especially considering the remarkable favour that it has met with.

We see, then, a very decided repugnance to the doctrine of our Lord's *vicarious death*, that is to say, in the natural sense of His dying *instead of our dying*. It is distinctly allowed, however, that in His work there *was* a vicarious element—this being regarded as inherent in that confession of human sin which is ascribed to Him. This is an admission not perhaps to be met with in any other prominent writer of that class. He had read, it seems, in Jonathan Edwards, that there remained nothing for man but an infinite punishment unless he could satisfy divine justice by an infinite repentance; which being impossible, man had no means of procuring redemption for himself. Pursuing this thought, Dr. Campbell comes to see that such a repentance was provided by that confession of sin which, as an inevitable result of the incarnation, found expression from the heart of Jesus. And thus the Son of God incarnate *could not but* vicariously absorb the wrath, and satisfy the justice, of God!

Now surely, all this, to say the least, is far too ingenious and intricate for answering to what we understand by the salvation of God, and the Gospel of Christ. But, apart from this—and allowing that to be profound which seems only mystical and obscure—one is constrained to ask, How do you know it? Where did you learn it? One theologian may have started another on the track of a conclusion the very opposite of his own; but what says the Word of God about it? That is our question; and in regard to it our author offers us no help.

Waiving, however, the question of direct Scripture authority—let us see what the belief itself amounts to.

Here, then, to begin with, is the assumption that an adequate measure of confession and repentance would have been sufficient to satisfy the justice, and obviate the wrath, of God. But whence this assumption? Does Scripture suggest it? Does conscience approve it? Does reason demand it? What is it after all but a speculation?—and one too for which there is no room left according to the actual administration and judgment of God. It might suit the majestic intellect of Edwards to indulge in such thoughts, whether as regards punishment or satisfaction. But speculation is equally worthless, whether in finding a basis for the doctrine of eternal torment, or for a scheme of deliverance from it. Nor is it worth any one's pains to speculate as to some impossible thing which might have averted a judgment, distinctly and positively pronounced from the first, as the proper consequent of sin.

But now the strange thing in Dr. Campbell's theory is this. Here, according to Scripture, is the actual judgment of God proclaiming death as the just punishment of sin. That he leaves behind, in favour of a theoretical, impossible, repentance which—had it not been impossible—*might have suited*, instead of the direct positive punishment. Then, when there stares him in the face an actual atoning death by the God-man, as meeting that actual judgment against the sinner, he turns aside from this, and sets up, as in the Saviour, an assumed repentance, now to "absorb divine wrath," in the way in which, according to the assumption, the adequate human repentance, if not impossible, would have done. Whether is this, I wonder, to walk in a land of substance or of

shadow?—in the light of God, or by sparks of our own kindling? Why not take the case as it stands, and show us how it is to be met, and has been met—instead of first imagining an impossibility, and then speculating in regard to a supposed parallel to that from among the facts of Christianity—so as to find out through such a maze of thought what is the reality of the great Propitiation? Because an important principle in abstruse mathematics may sometimes be established by processes involving some such hypothesis, is that a reason for adopting such a method of teaching the Christian atonement?

Let us now see what it is that is said to have been effected through the assumed confession and repentance of Christ. “The wrath of God against sin is a reality, and it has to be dealt with.” This at least is language as directly at variance with all the thoughts of the other writers of this class as any ever used by us—“The justice of God is not a delusion, and it has to be satisfied.” The wrath of God has to be ‘dealt with;’ mark the expression—not ‘met,’ not ‘endured’ in any way, but ‘dealt with.’ Here, again, we ask, How does the writer know? It seems very much as if, after all, he were only assuming, while yet essentially altering, a popular belief. What, then, is this wrath of God? It is a ‘reality,’ we are assured, and, of course, a very terrible reality—not that exhibition of burning love, or, at the worst, that wholesome medicine, or kind correction, which some regard it as being. For we should not need a Saviour to deliver us from that. But, on the contrary, there is, it seems, a real wrath of God against man for sin, and that has to be ‘dealt with,’ and, of course, put out of the way. To the same effect there

is a justice which has to be 'satisfied,' or 'have its due accorded to it,' and that, before sin can be put away, and pardoned to us. Such is unquestionably the admission; and nothing, I repeat, can be more thoroughly at variance with the fundamental principles of the writers before us. But now, what has justice done which calls for 'satisfaction,' except that—in default of the adequate, but impossible repentance—it has sentenced the sinner to die? Here, then, surely, is the 'due which' (in some form) 'has to be accorded to it.' Here is the thing that conscience must certainly crave in the view of actual sin and justice—instead of that hypothetical, impossible, thing which so little concerns us. And here is that which, at the very least, seems to be the great fact in the Gospel—namely, a Saviour going right up to justice, *as it now stands*, and professing to 'accord to it its due.' But no, it is not this that we are to understand. We are to suppose a 'dealing with wrath' in which no wrath comes, in any measure, sense, or form, upon Him who deals with it! We are to suppose a satisfying of justice in which justice gets nothing 'accorded to it' of that which it *now*—in default of the impossible, infinite, repentance—seeks as 'its due!' Enough that if man had had sufficient capacity, (say a divine humanity) he might have presented a 'repentance adequate' to put away wrath and satisfy justice. It is of no consequence to reflect what his sin would *then* have been, and what amount of repentance would *then* have been 'adequate.' It is only, of course, a speculation, and that always admits of license. And so, putting aside every embarrassing element, we have just to go back to the hypothesis, and build upon it, assuming that now 'the divine humanity in Christ' has

“uttered its *amen* to the judgment and wrath of God against sin”—has “accorded its due to justice,” by that sympathy with the Father’s mind regarding evil which He has so perfectly displayed. And thus He has ‘absorbed the wrath,’ and ‘satisfied the justice;’ and now the ground is clear for our acceptance. Such is the theory—atonement by the Saviour’s confession and repentance. Is it wrong, then, if—because of its resting upon a basis thus fictitious—we conclude that the scheme itself can be no better?

And what is the scheme? Here is the Son of God—identified by His incarnation with humanity—feeling as if all that belonged to man, and hence all man’s sins, belonged to Him. Here He is in the name of all His brethren, and as their Representative, confessing with an ‘adequate sorrow’ the evil that has been done—entering with a perfect harmony into the divine judgment against it—pronouncing with all the power of His ‘divine humanity’ an ‘amen to that judgment’—declaring, that is to say, that the judgment—even the judgment of man to utter death is a righteous thing and should be executed—declaring this, with all the pain consequent upon a perfect sorrow for human sin, or sympathy with divine justice—and yet *without taking upon Himself one tittle of that judgment which He pronounces to be so righteous!* This, I say, is the scheme. And I solemnly ask, what one faculty of man can it satisfy, except it be his imagination? What is it but a glittering dust cast in the eyes that were longing for light? What, after all, is the thing really pictured to us—but a grand act of *intercession* akin to what might take place any day among ourselves? Thus suppose a

very dutiful elder son with a number of rebellious brothers, upon whom their father, in the calmest exercise of 'justice,' has been under the necessity of pronouncing some severe 'judgment;' and this 'justice' must be 'satisfied.' The elder brother is as remarkable for love to the younger ones as for harmony with his father. And so he comes and says, 'Father, I am deeply sorry for what my brothers have done—as sorry as if I had myself offended; I feel for the injury done as if it had been done to me; as to the 'judgment,' I feel deeply that it is righteous, and such as I would with all my heart submit to were I in the place of my brothers.' Now all this involves, of course, a real pain to the elder brother. He cannot be what he is, and not feel such a pain—whatever the course he may actually adopt. It is a great comfort also, a real satisfaction to the father, to have such a son. How far he may, under the tender feelings thus excited, and the hope of beneficial influence, change his mind, and retract the 'judgment' against the offenders, is another question. But it would be a strange use of words to say that the dutiful son by his sorrow, contrition, and repentance, had 'dealt with his father's displeasure,' and 'satisfied his justice,' by 'according to it its due'! There is no 'satisfaction,' in short, offered at all except to the father's feelings—and that from the reflection that he has one such son, with the hope that he who exhibits such noble principle may prove a new power of reformation in the family. And thus moved he may possibly dispense with justice, and turn to mercy instead. But, as to the process alleged, there is nothing of it here. The whole thing is simply a loving contribution of the good son to his father's comfort; or, at the utmost, an implicit act

of intercession, that, for his sake, the brothers may be pardoned. If now it be meant that this is the meaning of Christ's atonement, let it be spoken out. But let it not be said that such action as this on His part is a 'dealing with wrath,' or a 'satisfying of justice.' Nor will it be possible to gain aught for such a view by alleging the points in which the divine Mediator excels the supposed human one. Allow that HE is one with the Father, and one with the brothers, to a degree inconceivable in any other case. That, after all, is no new element to alter the result—but only a new degree of the same quality—enhancing the process which must still lead to the same issue.

And once more, where is the confession—and, above all, the contrition or repentance in such a case? The son might say—'Father, I do regret that thy sons and my brothers have so behaved; I am ashamed that those so allied to me should thus have treated thee.' But how could he say—'Father, I confess that I have sinned in common with them—I am sorry, and I do repent?' Even to imagine such a thing is impossible. And does it become more possible if we suppose one to assume a new relationship to certain great offenders, for the one purpose of delivering them from their badness? Would it become natural or reasonable for such a one—who by his very position was "separate from them"—to confess sin in common with them, or, as I should say, *instead of them*—to cherish sorrow—to practise repentance in their room? What, in short, is the whole idea but a stupendous fiction? Let the Son of God identify Himself with humanity to the very utmost—let Him be far more one with us than was Adam with his wife when he said, "This is now bone of my bone"—yet the

very conception of His confessing sin and repenting for it is an impossibility. Just let any one—I do not say imagine it, and write of it, but calmly and definitely endeavour to conceive the thing to himself—‘Father, these are my brethren, and I confess their sin as my own; I am sorry in my inmost soul for what they have done; feeling that I, partaking of their nature, partake also of their evil doings. Father, I repent of it; for, in union with them, I too have done it. Thou knowest that I have never offended Thee; yet in their sinning I have sinned. Thou knowest that I have perfectly done Thy will; yet I repent of their rebellion as being in a most real sense my own.’ Is the thing conceivable? Is the thought endurable? And yet what else can be the meaning of ‘vicarious confession,’ on the part of the innocent? What else can be signified by a “*perfect repentance* in humanity for all the sins of man”? Or are we to suppose that it is neither guilty man that thus adequately repents (for that were impossible)—nor the spotless God-man? for that too is impossible—but only some impersonal humanity—at once realistic and nominalist—some fancied person both exclusive and inclusive of all the individual sinners of mankind? Yes, it is just this unsupposable thing that we must suppose, if we are to attempt to conceive what this theory can mean. It is a painful thing, I feel, thus to speak on such a matter, and of an author so devout. But what alternative is there which truth can for a moment sanction?

I leave the question, then, to the serious consideration of those who are equally interested with myself in the Saviour’s work—In what sense could the Lord Jesus either confess sin, or exercise repentance for it? And

when I am met with the counter question—‘Then how could He undergo a penalty for it?’—this, I answer, is just what we can allow. This is just what sound principle and abundant analogy enable us to conceive. For, while we never could have imagined that elder son saying, ‘Father, I have sinned in common with these my brethren’—we can quite understand Him saying, (and this is the whole of the present question)—‘Father, I am willing to pay for them—willing to go to prison—willing to do anything—willing to die for them.’

So much for the merits of the new theory of *atonement through vicarious confession and repentance*. And one thing about it is plain, namely, that there is thus set up something betwixt a sinner and a free pardon altogether independent of his personal repentance. How is it that they do not see this who make that to be one of their strongest objections to the ‘evangelical’ view of atonement through a vicarious death-suffering? For beyond all doubt such is the case. Thus in Dr. Campbell’s view the ‘vicarious confession’ occupies that very place in ‘satisfying justice’ (and, as he says, in dealing with divine wrath) which the ‘vicarious death’ does in the evangelical view. There is as real a transference in his view as in ours. If it is a fiction in the latter view to suppose the Redeemer undergoing that which was legally incumbent only on us, it is no less a fiction in the other. If it is impossible that God should accept the *death* of one instead of the death of another—how is it possible that He should accept of the *repentance*?

And yet though this is clear enough, still that theory, however contrary to fact and principle, is consistent enough with itself throughout. But what shall we say

of the writers, who have adopted the idea of 'vicarious confession' as only *one* of the articles of their creed in connection with the various other matters in which, according to them, *the atonement consists?*—and that too after having so positively laid it down that there *never was any thing* between a sinner and a free pardon—nothing, in short, to be done—nothing to be suffered—nothing to be removed—his own repentance being all that was ever wanted—Christ's sacrifice only displaying the love and readiness of God to receive us, the moment we enter into harmony with it. And yet this is actually what we find in the passage given above (page 385). After having again and again stated the absolute freedom of pardon in all circumstances—after having drawn out again and again the points which *constitute the atonement*—without a hint of there having been such a thing as a 'vicarious confession'—much less of its necessity—it is actually said there that "*The Father could not be satisfied without such a confession of human sin*—as the Son adequately offered to the Father." Are we to understand, then, that Christ being sinless confessed sin as if He had been a sinner, on account of His relation to us—so that we, through our relation to Him, obtain the benefit of His confession—or that God comes *in some manner* to be satisfied with us, in consequence of that confession? Is this what we are taught? Does the writer mean that, in some way or other we are regarded as having in some sense confessed and repented when Christ did? We ask from a simple desire to know what the statement really does mean.

But now, such being the theory—whether as sufficient by itself for a view of atonement, or only as supple-

mentary—where, it is time to ask, is the evidence for a doctrine so extraordinary? It is of no use to tell us that “He who was THE TRUTH could not be in humanity, and not utter a perfect *amen* to the judgment of God against sin”—for, indeed, no holy being anywhere can refrain from so doing. (Rev. xv. 3, 4; xvi. 5.) But there is no element of confession in that. Before He was incarnate the Son of God uttered as loud an *amen* to the divine righteousness as He did in Gethsemane; for what was it but such a sympathy with His Father, together with love for men, that brought Him among us at all? But there was no confession of sin in *that* ‘*amen*.’ And if it be said—‘No, for He was not then incarnate, and, not being as yet identified with us, He could not confess our sin, could not exercise repentance on our behalf’—our objection is still as ready as the answer, and it is this—‘He is incarnate now, identified with us now, He puts forth a very loud *amen* to divine justice now—but He does not therefore confess our sin now.’ Is it said—‘Of course not, for that is done already’? Nay, but you have just told us that He who is THE TRUTH could not be *in humanity*, and not do this. Clearly, therefore, His confession and repentance should still continue as true as ever, and as some actually declare that they do!*

* Thus a popular writer has it—“There is in nature and the human heart a pleading, interceding power which comes in constantly to temper this spirit of moral indignation; and this element in the divine mind the Scriptures represent by the sublime image of an eternally interceding High Priest, who, having experienced every temptation of humanity, constantly urges all that can be thought in mitigation of eternal justice. As a spotless and high-toned mother bears in her bosom the anguish of the impurity and vileness of her child—so the eternally suffering, eternally interceding love of Christ bears the sins of our lost race.” (Mrs. H. B. Stowe, “Dred,” p. 451.)

The following gives expression to the same sentiment—and carries

If this then will not do, is there any one reference in the New Testament to this extraordinary confession and repentance?—for I know of none. Our Lord made little secret of His own feelings and principles. Did He ever tell or hint that there was such a one as this among them? He spoke much of men's sins;—did He ever intimate any such experience as that of confession or repentance on account of them? Sorrow He constantly felt for them, and sometimes anger (Mark iii. 5);—did He ever claim to Himself any trace of the sentiments now imputed to Him? During His last week He spoke freely of His soul-trouble (John xii. 27); on His last night He spoke of pouring out His blood (Matt. xxvi. 28); and actually did with the utmost freedom pour out His heart to His Father, declaring among other things, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee." More than that, there came upon Him on that same night a sorrow which He described as being "unto death." The sweat came from Him as blood-clots; He agonized over the cup, and begged for its removal—and then followed the 'Eli, Eli'—and the prayer for His murderers, and the promise to the thief, and the heart-breaking, and the cry of 'Finished'—but not one hint of sin confessed. And then the apostolic writings. But it is enough to name them—there is nothing of that in these—not, at least,

out in a way that Dr. Campbell would not approve of, the idea of a "divine amen in humanity"—"Christ is God revealed in manifestations towards the weak and wicked. That part of the divine Father which is adapted to imperfection is Jesus Christ . . . That which in God is pity, love, forgiveness—that view of God which makes Him the nurse, the mother, the father, the friend that we need, is Christ—whatever name we call it by." (H. W. Beecher on "Coming to Christ," in *New York Herald*, 15th April, 1871.)

until we misread every statement in them which sets forth the virtue of Christ's *dying for us*; and take it to mean not the 'dying' at all—but only a certain feeling which He had all His life through, and more especially when He died. In one passage only, in fact, does there seem anything like an approach to the idea in question, (Heb. v. 7)—and yet it is not there—not one breath of it. And where is it, in short, but in certain modern heads which, too willing to get rid of the simple truth of a real substitution, are only too ready to take refuge in the fiction of an unreal confession?

In saying all this, I am not forgetting two verses in the Psalms—"Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." (xl. 12.) "O God, Thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from Thee." (lxix. 5.) Now, because the first of these Psalms contains a very clear Messianic passage ("Lo, I come," &c.), does it follow that every word in it is of the same character? If, in many of his *actions* and *sufferings*, David was an eminent type of the Messiah, but in others of them the very contrary, why should not the same be the case with his *words*—and possibly even in the compass of a single Psalm? And above all, if in his *sins* he is no figure of the holy Saviour, why should any one suppose him to be so in his *confession* of them? The other Psalm has more, indeed, of single expressions which we find quoted in the New Testament, in connection with the suffering Saviour, or His followers—but more also which would in no way suit the mouth of Him who prayed, "Father, forgive them." And still less could He, who was at once

all wisdom and all truth, ever have said—"O God, Thou knowest my foolishness."

Such is the much-lauded theory of atonement by repentance and confession. A judgment has been pronounced, the removal of which is the first necessity for the well-being of the guilty party. And this removal is effected through a certain person stepping in and *feeling a perfect sympathy with the Judge and the judgment*—thus yielding to justice its due!

Here, then, we close our review of the opinions of a certain class now in circulation as to the character of the great Sacrifice. Of these some of the principal, as now examined, may be thus stated.

We have the one which regards its value as consisting in a surrender or sacrifice of self-will—thus furnishing a grand model-sacrifice of immense power for the benefit of mankind. This, which may be called the *moral-practical* view, errs in putting one of the designed results of the sacrifice in the place of the sacrifice itself—as God's great provision for redeeming us from death through the offering of life for life.

Then we have the view of the Saviour as in perfect sympathy with men, and '*therefore* bearing their sins.' This, which we may call the *sentimental* view, depends, as we have seen, on the fallacy of ambiguous language.

Next there is the representative view, or Christ in His life and death, as making a perfect presentation of humanity to His Father—God thus seeing it as it should be, and graciously accepting it. This we may call the *ideal* view.

And then the view of Christ as going through a perfect confession and repentance—which, though perhaps

the most devout of all, and approaching nearest to the truth—I can only call the *inconceivable* and *impossible* view.

And all this comes from a determination not to accept of the plain Scripture truth of the shedding of blood, or the giving away of life, for the true ransom of our souls, and remission of our sins. If it be asked how such extraordinary views can have arisen in connection with a revelation so clear as the Gospel,—they are simply, I answer, the inevitable result of at once receiving so much, and refusing so much, of that revelation—of first rejecting one cardinal truth, and then exaggerating, distorting, and misplacing another, so as to supply by it the place of the truth rejected. This is what comes, and ever must come, from professing to retain and reverence the Bible, while yet discarding some of its fundamental principles.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SON OF MAN.

SIN had broken the bond between God and man. "Adam, where art thou? . . . I heard Thy voice, and I was afraid, and hid myself." (Gen. iii. 9, 10.) Such was its first-fruits; and here was the growth—"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." (Isaiah lix. 2.) And now, the prodigal is in a far country, with the communication broken between him and his Father. It is in such circumstances that the Son of God has come to arrange and promote reunion. He has appeared as the SON OF MAN. That any one should harmoniously sustain both these characters at once is in itself the grandest of miracles. That the Scripture should, without effort, and without confusion, set before us such a character—such a person—is an evidence of truth, equally beyond the reach of contrivance and of accident. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John i. 1, 14.) Such is "The Son of Man."

Thus God proposes and proclaims reunion. He does more—He realizes; He represents it. His design is that man shall be one with Him again; and, in the carrying out of this design, He begins by becoming one

with man. There is a difference, indeed, both wide and vital. For it does not follow that, what the Creator may do in the way of stooping, the creature can do in the way of rising. Because the Word may become flesh, we are not to suppose that flesh can become the Word. The Son of God becomes the Son of man; and the sons of men become sons of God—but in a different sense and manner. Enough if each proceeds to the limits of his own capacity. Thus the union of humanity with Deity in the Eternal Word will be all that was needed or possible—the result, as regards Him, being a union as complete as can be conceived. The corresponding union in us will be equally according to the utmost of our need or possibility. But then our measure in regard to these must ever fall immeasurably beneath His. And here, again, is a miracle as substantial as it is splendid—the manner in which Scripture treats the regeneration of man, and his reunion with God. For in all this, marvellous as it is, we find nothing material, nothing mystical—no frigid definitions, or feverish descriptions—but as everywhere else, simplicity and sobriety—all that is pure and practical, and yet inexpressibly sublime—no attempt to dive into the essence of things, but a plain dealing with their circumstances—no hesitation in the announcement, nor self-suspecting, superfluous, energy in the proof, but the simple exhibition of God's truth for man's life—truth shining out upon human darkness, soft as the dawning light, brilliant as the full-orbed sun. Such, surely, is not the manner of philosophy, or of pietism. Egypt never gave birth to a system or method like this, nor Babylon, nor Jerusalem, nor Athens—nor any of all the oracles of old time or now—nor the human bosom

anywhere—but the mind of the Eternal only. To go so far, and then stop—among the marvels of the system this is the chief. To teach such a truth, to hold forth such a blessing—and in such a style—here is the thing that transcends all effort, and bespeaks the action of Him with whom to purpose and to perform are one.

The Son of Man. Let us look at Him, and think of Him. It was a strange command to Israel from the top of Sinai when the Holy One proclaimed, “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.” They had sought by every means to provoke Him, and put Him away; and yet, instead of turning His back and going away, He will pardon and draw nigh. Nor will He visit only—He will dwell—dwell among them—“There will I meet with thee, and commune with thee.” And thus, if they will keep away from Him, He will come close to them. If they will repel Him, He will attract them. All their wickedness shall only be the occasion for the fixing of His dwelling-place among them. Yes, and He will have a substantial tabernacle as the manifest symbol and pledge of His constant, living abode. And Israel shall furnish the material, and with their own hands shall set up the tent for the habitation of the divine, self-invited Guest. It was the most wonderful thing in the whole of that ancient economy. Solomon, who was no stranger to wonders, could only think of it as the greatest he had ever heard of—“Will God in very deed dwell with men upon the earth?” But now there has been a more wonderful thing than that. God has dwelt among men—and sat, and talked, and walked, and toiled with them—in the tabernacle of their own flesh. We would have put Him away; but He would not go. We ran

to hide ourselves ;—He came to seek us. We banished ourselves into the far country ;—He followed us into its farthest wastes. We had turned every one to his own way ;—and He came in person to call us back to Himself. “Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways,” had been the voice of our sin ;—and the Son of man upon earth was the divine response—“the Son of man come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Surely, there was no ambiguity in the announcement, ‘I have come to you ; come now to Me ;’—this was the meaning of it—‘You have wandered from God ; and thus God follows you in your wanderings—and follows you in your own flesh and blood—even as one of yourselves. You were afraid of God—but you are not afraid of your brother man !—and so, “because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, I Myself have taken part of the same”—“To you, O men, I call ; and my voice is to the sons of men.” See, it is the Son of man—as like you—as much one of you, as yourselves are—and not the less, because it is the Son of God.’ Such was the language, whether spoken or breathed—that was ever issuing from the lips or the life of Emmanuel. Had He been only man, the coming to *Him*, though easy enough, would not have been coming to God. Had He been only God—the difficulty would have been to come at all. But now He is both. The God whom we had offended has come to seek after us—and that, in the very humanity which had committed the offence.

Thus it was that Incarnate God instructed and attracted men. Thus He met and communed with them—turning them at once into disciples and friends, and preparing them for the still purer and more joyous fellow-

ship of that time of which He said—"We will come and make our abode with him." Already had the first step been taken; already had the bond been established, and the chain fastened to the wanderer's heart. Whatever might follow, in time or eternity, could only be the following up of what was thus originated. The appearance of Emmanuel upon earth told with sufficient plainness what was in the heart of God towards man. For man had now "seen with his eyes, and with his hands had handled, the WORD OF LIFE." And from this the transition was easy to the end designed—"Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

There was another broken chain equally gathered up in the Son of man. If God had come to man that He might draw man to God—so, as the Son of man, He had come to men that He might draw them together among themselves. For, in His law of love, God had given two great commandments, and man had cast them both away. Therefore the Son of man will now show what it is for man to love his brother. And the love was perfect—the tenderness, the sympathy, the self-devotion—the pouring out of heart and wearing out of life—as "He went about doing good." But why spend words about it? It exceeds all words, and is most fitly met with astonishment;—"The kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." (Isaiah lii. 15.)

And so the plan was that He should undergo a large share of the sorrows and trials of earth—His cup of trouble never empty, and often full—ever beset by evil men, and never forgotten by the prince of darkness—thus learning obedience by suffering, and sympathy by

sorrow—so that, after having gone through all sorts of temptation, He “might be able to succour them that are tempted.”

Is this the conception, so far as it goes, of THE SON OF MAN? May we not, then, without impropriety, say that, with His whole person—from the crown of His head to the sole of His feet, and with His two outstretched arms—He was continually acting out His gracious purpose before the world, and towards it? For do we not see Him, as it were, with that uplifted head (“The Son of Man which is in heaven,”) pointing to His divine connection, and presenting God to men—while, with His lowly feet, He walks the earth, inviting man to lay aside distrust, and come to Him with confidence—stretching out, at the same time, His hands on every side, to draw man to man, that in His bosom they, long divided, may meet, and live henceforth in fellowship? Or, without a figure, displaying in Himself the perfect union of humanity and Deity, He showed that the sin-separated creature and Creator were to be once more united. The holy God might have refused to touch unholy man; and guilty man could not certainly have dared to touch the holy God. But in the Son of man each has an equal and a fellow. Each can touch, and communicate with *Him*—without taint to the holiness, or hazard from the unholiness; and thus the right hand of the divine majesty being laid upon the Son of God, and the right hand of our humble confidence upon the Son of man our brother, these two hands can meet and be henceforth and for ever joined.

There is still another thing—and that is a subjection

in the Son of man to His God and Father, as perfect as His love and sympathy towards His brethren. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Thus the tender bud of His fragrant life bursts out before the world in His lovely childhood; and thus at the agonizing close its rich fruit is gathered in—"Not my will, O my Father, but Thine be done;" and this without one moment's interruption to the harmony of obedience during all the one and twenty years between. Subjection—that was the principle—loving, holy, sweet, self-sacrificing subjection—"I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." Even where He seemed most independent—that is, in His miracles—there too, He was practising an entire subjection. For it was by no power of His own Godhead—as too often lightly assumed—but by the power of the Spirit given Him by His Father—that these wonders were wrought. "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works"—"He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak." (John xiv. 10, xii. 49 *cf.* Acts x. 38.)

Thus there lived on earth THE SON OF MAN—He in whom alone, as a single Person, Deity and humanity ever actually met to dwell—and in whom therefore, as never in another, God and man might meet and live in fellowship. And thus living, He acted as the model-man—the one perfect man, that had ever appeared on earth—THE MAN, we may say; for all others had been but broken, partial men, from the first Adam downwards, till the advent of the SECOND MAN. And thus, summing up in His single self all the elements and interests of humanity—in combination with the divine sonship

through which He became a real Emmanuel—He could take the position which allowed Him to declare, “He that gathereth not with me scattereth.” Thus there stood forth as a new Head of men, One whose object it was to gather to Himself the scattered members of a body henceforth to fill a place correspondingly new in the creation of God. And thus did it appear in Him what humanity was capable of—what it was designed for—and what it was to be brought to. For here was displayed that image of the Firstborn, to which in due time, all the younger brethren were to be conformed. Yes, here was the true Archetype, or Prototype of humanity. And in this we see another of the standing miracles of the Christian scheme—that, without any detracting from *His* greatness, or exaggeration of *our* littleness, the Son of God should thus, in the assumed capacity of Son of man, be capable of presenting so majestic, and yet perfectly natural a model for us every-day mortals. For so it is—from the lowest root to the topmost branch, His character is to be ours. Thus in regard to humility, He says—“I have given you an example;” “Learn of me.” And in regard to love, the same. As to His Father’s will, the doing it, as He did it, is one of the few articles of the brief prayer which He left behind, and one of the plainest lessons of His constant teaching. Amid all the tumult without, from the constant surging of human and Satanic passion against Him, did peace still reign in that pure, loving, godly bosom. In conformity with which is that wonderful donation to us, “My peace I give unto you.” And so as it was His to exhibit in perfection the exclusively Christian harmony between the deepest sorrow and the highest joy—He could at once say—“Blessed

are ye that mourn," and, "These things have I spoken to you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

Thus did the Son of man, as our great model, represent to us our humanity in its utmost truth—from the opening to the closing of His course—in sorrow and joy, in love and labour, in obedience to God and self-sacrifice for man—"leaving us an example that we should follow His steps." The design was that such as He had been, His followers should be in this world—(1 John iv. 17)—fashioned in His mould—baptized into His spirit—breathing out His love—walking as He walked—living His life—or, as one of them expresses his own deepest feeling—"LIVING CHRIST." (Phil. i. 21.) Where we should least perhaps have expected a model, even there we find it. For we could hardly have thought that One, so amply supplied with all good, would have spent so much of His time in prayer to God. And yet He did—often walking far to be alone with Him—as well as rising early, and spending whole nights in supplication. And still less should we have thought of Him as a model in those matchless deeds in which He seemed to lift His head above all other men. Even these, however, as we have seen, He did, not by inherent right or might, but through the same Spirit that He was to shed forth for like purposes on His followers;—"He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; because God was with Him, having anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power"—so that He could say, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John xiv. 12.)

And yet with all this, there is one thing in which He is not held forth as a model for us. And that is nothing else than His death. I do not speak, of course, in regard to all its aspects; for even in some of these the correspondence is perfect, while in others of them it disappears altogether—the agreement elsewhere only making more prominent the disagreement here. *Jesus courted death*—He drew it down upon Himself—He took for granted the purpose of His enemies, and did nothing to counteract it. More than that—instead of attempting to allay, He acted so as positively to inflame their rage. He *could* have pleaded His rights before Pilate; and *might* have moved him. He did not; and so without one effort to save Himself, or prevent the greatest crime that the world ever committed—He let Himself be condemned, and crucified. In this He is not a model to us. For not thus does a wise or good man treat himself or his followers. Not thus had Jesus Himself done once and again. Whence, then, the difference now? The question will arise; nor is it susceptible of any good answer but just this—that, while He *was* a model, He was something besides—something altogether different.

Taking the Son of man, then, according at once to the true value of the title, and the significance of His position, are we to suppose that, simply by His appearance and work upon earth, He has actually or virtually united man to God? In reply to this, I ask another question—Do we believe that He has actually, or virtually, *drawn man to Himself*—winning the heart from sin, guiding the life in holiness? For the one was as certainly a part of His real object as the other. And it is in vain to speak of blessings that are invis-

ble, insensible, and in fact supposititious only—if there be no appearance of the blessing that is direct, palpable, and experimental. As the Son of man, He does, beyond all doubt, and in the most impressive manner, call men to the most real fellowship with Himself, in all that is good and holy. He does, as such, go through this world for the purpose of inviting man to a union with God, worthy of that union which appears, with however different an aspect, in His own incomparable self. But, though His desire and design appear so clearly, both in His great human title, and the whole course of His moral action, it by no means follows that *these were sufficient* for the *end* which He had in view. They might have been essential for the great object, and sufficient both for proclaiming and exhibiting it—while yet for the effecting of it something altogether different might be needed. This surely is a very possible thing, and not to be denied, until we have clearly seen that there is no other requisite in the case—much less if we are distinctly informed that there is another. Nor let it be forgotten that, when all the prerequisites for effecting the designed union have been met—and when now the provision is complete—there may still be some essential condition on which the operation and enjoyment of the whole shall depend. And that condition may be, as it certainly is—to say nothing at all of how it is to be supplied—the hearty submission of the rebellious soul, with an actual acceptance of the proffered benefit.

How, then, stands the case? What was the result of the earthly sojourn of the Son of man? Very different indeed from what theory might have prejudged;—“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not;

but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John i. 12.) "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (iii. 19.) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." (Matt. xxiii. 37.) In a word—"He is despised and rejected of men." And, according to Him, the men by whom He is rejected "perish." Such is His teaching—without one solitary hint that, after the "eternal ages" (whether of saints or of God) have run their course, there shall still, through the "education" of these ages, be a restoration to life and bliss of all the 'non-elect' and 'unsaved'! By what process good men arrive at such a conclusion I leave to others to understand. They may tell us that their theology lies in the words "Our Father"—and that these words warrant this extraordinary belief. For my part I would rather listen to the great Teacher Himself in regard to the future of the lost than put a meaning on those two precious words so flagrantly at variance with the whole scope of His teaching. As for the words themselves I never can forget that they were meant for 'disciples'—and even if they *had been meant* for all, I should be obliged to allow that they had not been *accepted by all*—certainly not by those of whom the same authority declared, "Ye are of your father the devil."

Shall we, then, with such views, give up our confidence in the full significance of our Lord's favourite title? Shall we begin to fear that He did not come for

the restoring and the uniting of man to God?—did not come to be the model-man for all men? No, we cannot do that. For so plain is the whole matter—so distinct is the teaching conveyed by the title under consideration, that we cannot part with our faith in that without parting with the Emmanuel altogether. On the contrary, the design did succeed and has succeeded—though on a different scale, perhaps, from what human calculation might have pronounced—and in combination with elements of which human wisdom may not approve. It is easy, of course, to ask, with whatever view,—But why so rejected, if He came for such high ends? Could He not have overcome the opposition, without violence to the liberty of the agent? And if so, as we may assume, why not do it, to make more manifest His grand object of uniting God and man? How, in short, having come with such a purpose, could He go away with no more of result as to the actual attraction and renewal of man? Is such a question asked—whether in perplexity or incredulity? Enough if I answer that the same thing has been seen quite as plainly, from the beginning till now, on fields less liable to misconception. Thus on the field of universal nature we have had God teaching men “His eternal power and Godhead,” and men not learning the lesson. We have had Him “leaving not Himself without witness, but doing good,—sending rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons”—and yet men rejecting the witness, and refusing the gratitude. He has been arranging everything so that men “should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him;” and yet with this result—“There is none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God.” (Rom. i. 20; Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 27;

Rom. iii. 11.) In the same way all "God's goodness, longsuffering, and forbearance," are equally adapted and designed to "lead men to repentance"—but few do repent. "God is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," and yet with what result? (Rom. ii. 4; 2 Peter iii. 9.)

Enough, then. We can well admit all that is contained in that wonderful manifestation in the flesh. We can well feel bound both to come ourselves, and to invite others to come, for the enjoyment of the proffered union. But we need not therefore assume as a fact what was never designed to be one, or forget other provisions just as essential towards the great result.

For how did the Saviour Himself, we may ask, regard this matter? He at least understood His own position and purpose as "the Son of man." Whether He, by the simple fact of His incarnation, was actually uniting man with God—whether, in His own life of self-sacrifice, He was really presenting humanity as an offering to His Father—in what sense, by His thus representing the human race, He was obtaining or exhibiting its reconciliation to God—all this He perfectly understood. And where does He teach it? Where does He appear to feel it? Strange if this, the very purpose of His coming into the world, should not somehow have found utterance from His lips! He made no secret of His Father's love in bestowing a gift compared to which the created universe would have been a trifle. His whole life was the most intensely earnest expression of His own coming, as "the Son of man," "to seek and save the lost." But where shall we find one word from Him to the effect of His

being the Representative of humanity, in the sense or for the purpose now so earnestly alleged? Where do we find one symptom of the fact that pardon and reconciliation were thus in any sense effected? On the contrary, does He not constantly treat men as practically needing something which the Incarnation has not made theirs, and which individually they must seek and get for themselves? Is He not ever proclaiming that— notwithstanding all the significance of the *Father's* name and *His own*—each man must “be born again”—must “repent”—must “receive Him” as the “Bread of life,” and “the Saviour” of souls—or be lost for ever? Somehow or other man's state, it seems, is one of death not of life, of darkness not of light, of perdition not of salvation—even now that *He* has come into the world as its Life, its Light, its Saviour. Thus He constantly exhibits the actual condition of those around Him, and commands that a like proclamation be addressed to “all men everywhere.” On the other hand, it is an interruption to the normal state of men on every side, when He breaks in upon it with a voice like this—“Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;”—“Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace;”—“This day is salvation come to this house;”—“Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother.”

Does He give no account, then, of how this great blessing comes?—of how an event so momentous takes place in the history of a human soul? He does. And mark what the account is. Remember how on one occasion He declares that “the Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because (yes, simply *because*) He is THE SON OF MAN.” Does He anywhere

inform us, then, that He has power to save *because*, simply because, *He is the Son of man*? Never. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." The serpent was nothing without the pole, nor the Son of man without the cross. "The Bread of God is He that cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world." From this it might seem, at first, as if the mere circumstance of His humanity, so full as it surely was of grace and truth, were of itself a quickening and saving thing. But no: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." And, lest any one should strangely imagine that such flesh and blood came to be food for us any otherwise than through sacrificial death, He expressly declares—"The Bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John vi. 33, 51, 53.) Or, take Him as a Shepherd—knowing His sheep, and known of them—leading them in and out, and finding for them pasture—a Shepherd with a hand out of which none can pluck—One who "gives life to His sheep," "life eternal," "life more abundantly;" and yet not a Shepherd at all, except as "laying down His life for them." (John x.) So at another time, speaking under the character of "the Son of man," He points at once to His highest glory and His deepest abasement—He engages for an abundant harvest of souls through a certain assimilation which He insists on, to Himself. He will even "draw *all men* unto Him." And yet nothing of all this *because* He is *the Son of man*, but because, as such, He shall be "lifted up," and shall be like "a corn of wheat which falls into the ground and dies." (John xii. 23–32.)

Thus, *wherever He declares the ground* of His saving work—that ground is simple and unique. It is not what He was, nor what He was doing, all important as these were;—but what He had still to do—even His great dying act. It was nothing in the past, nothing in the present, but something in the future, to which He ever ascribed salvation—not the former two instead of the last—nor the last in addition to the others—but the last as single and alone. Think of it as we may, and interpret the rest of His life as we may—thus it is that the Saviour Himself presents that act; and thus He uniformly sets aside all else, that He may set up that in its undivided virtue—as the divine method of providing life eternal for sinful man.

But now, while He had so frequently spoken of His saving work—thus uniformly referring it to something about His death—it is not, as we have already seen, till the very close of His life that He communicates anything of a specific kind as to the exact means designed for the ransom of our souls, or the remission of our sins. And then mark to what He ascribes these. Is it after all to the grand circumstance of His being the Son of man?—to His having already offered a life-sacrifice in which God might see humanity with satisfaction—and humanity might see (I dare not say feel) itself quickened and purified, or at least stimulated to that which would prove its life and redemption?—No, to nothing of this kind does He ascribe such ransom or remission—but still to the one event of the future—unshared and unaided by any and all of the past;—“This is my blood shed for many, for the remission of sins”—“The Son of man is come to give His life a ransom for many.”

Thus at last we have a *direct, unambiguous* view of the *true representative* character of our Lord Jesus. At last, I say; for I cannot find it earlier, except in those intimations which pointed forward to the same event. And, important as these were, it cannot be said that they were perfectly *direct* like the present one. But now the last remnant of veil is thrown away, and the Son of man stands forth as doing, for a certain company represented by Him, something without which they must continue unransomed, unsaved. He appears, in short, as “giving His life a ransom”—and that, by the death which was only a week distant. But now, any one who gives his life as a ransom for another certainly ‘represents,’ or assumes, the place of that other on the ground of danger or of doom. And, as our Lord thus describes His own express design in coming into the world, I must believe—not *infer*, but *believe*—that He Himself as certainly ‘represents’ the company to which He points.

Thus our Lord gives His life as a ransom—and that for a company ‘represented’ by Himself, the Giver.

Now that He had *a life* of a very rare and precious kind to give away, we know. It was a life with all the value which humanity in its perfection could attain to—and that, as enhanced by very extraordinary circumstances—especially the one of the humanity being voluntarily assumed. But not only so; this “*Son of man*” was equally, and at the same time, the SON OF GOD. And hence His life obtains a value—we can perfectly *see* it, and seeing is all we need think of here—a value in itself incalculable and inconceivable. *Such a life*, according to the Scripture, was that which the

Son of man could call His own; and this surely is another miracle—such an announcement in such a style as the Bible employs. But it never dilates on the subject; nor shall we.

Possessed of such a life, it was this which the Son of man *gave away*. “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” Thus it became an ‘offering,’ or ‘sacrifice.’ For, strange as it may sound, for some purpose or other, He gave it up to His Father. “He offered Himself without spot to God”—“He gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God”—“Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.”

And “He gave it as *a ransom*”—that is to say, in the most intimate connection with the sin and death of others, so that, He giving up His life, theirs might be redeemed. We may stumble at this; we may say to ourselves, ‘Incredible, impossible; the giving away of life, that is, the fact of death, can never be agreeable to God.’ And thus we may resist, till our last hour, the great fact which stares us in the face, whether as coming out first in the provisional arrangement of old, or at last in the true redeeming work—the fact that, for some holy and righteous end, God actually has appointed and accepted the surrender of life as life. We may think that we do well in promulgating a law in which an actual death is not the penalty of sin; and in proclaiming a gospel in which life is not won for us at the cost of a life given as a direct, true, and sufficient ransom. But there stands the fact. Except for the Bible, man could never have conceived it; and with the Bible man will not altogether renounce it.

Finally—the company is stated on whose behalf the ransom is given. It is “*for many*.” Now this, of course,

simply indicates that the life is given not for one other only, or a few, but for a *multitude*; and the multitude may be any number which the case admits of. That is to say, the 'many' may signify a part of the whole; or it may signify a very large number absolutely regarded; for it is simply a 'multitude;' and that multitude may be a real 'all.' Is it so, then, or not? Again and again, the Scripture says that it is. With a uniformity hardly broken, even in appearance, it declares in every variety of form that Christ did DIE FOR ALL.

Are all pardoned, then? Are all saved? No. But if He died for all, did He not, at the same time, represent all? How, then, are all not saved? That depends, I answer, upon what the ransom and the representing involved; and, as the case is simply one of principle, it will be best explained by illustration.

Suppose, then, that there is an important privilege to be enjoyed in a neighbouring country, which I greatly desire to obtain for my countrymen. I engage with them that the cost shall be mine, and am appointed their representative, with full power to arrange the matter. In this capacity I present myself at the foreign court, and, in the name of my people, seek for the privilege. I am asked how many I represent. There are thirty millions of them, I answer, many of whom will avail themselves of the right—how many I cannot tell—but I want it for the whole, so that any one may, at any time, make use of it. And what, it is asked, do I offer in return for the privilege? I point to something which would be extremely valuable to the foreign state—a material property, or the right to an invention, or an important service to be rendered, or something

else—but which, being incapable of division, must be accepted entire, or altogether refused. I am well aware of its super-eminent value, but I have nothing else which would suit the purpose; and I am so anxious to secure the privilege that I would gladly make the sacrifice, even though none but my own family or friends should avail themselves of it. The price would not be excessive, though laid out for them only; nor is it inadequate for any number however great. On this understanding the matter is arranged. I have made a purchase for many, for all—independently of the numbers that may enjoy it—and yet at a cost in which there can be neither deficiency nor extravagance.

Suppose, now, that after thus arranging the matter for my countrymen as their representative in general—I take up my abode at the foreign court to manage the matter as the representative of those in particular who have availed themselves of my interference—will there be any incongruity between my action in the past, and in the present—that is to say, as representative under the more general or the more special aspect? What inconsistency can there be, then, between the position of the Redeemer as representative, on the cross, of that world which “God loved,” and the same Redeemer as representative, at God’s right hand, of those “who come unto God by Him,” and “for whom He ever liveth to make intercession?”

Or, I see a company of a thousand captives under a miserable bondage, some of whom can ill be spared by their country. Could I but provide the ransom, some I am sure would at once avail themselves of it, or might be persuaded to do so, though it is too plain

that many of them would prefer to live and die in slavery. Be this as it may, I have brothers in that company, and either I must provide the ransom, or they must continue slaves. What have I to give? One thing only. It is a jewel of priceless worth—far beyond in its entireness what the simple ransom-price of the whole thousand would amount to—but if broken up, worthless. I heartily surrender my indivisible treasure, and have the joy of taking my brothers to my bosom, and of delivering from bondage whoever chooses the liberty, without objecting to receive the boon from me. Again, there has been, in the sacrifice made, neither defect nor excess. More could not have been asked, and less I had not to give.

Is it difficult, then, to regard the life of the Son of man as the priceless indivisible jewel—given for the ransom of many, of all—whatever may prove in the end to be the number of the emancipated? How that company is to be fixed upon or gathered in is no question now. Enough if He knew for certain that His jewel should bring in a return of which He should never repent. Enough if the ransoming life can be sufficient for all, without being the source of causeless expenditure, as regards those who refuse it. Enough, in a word, if nothing more was wanted for all, and nothing less would have sufficed for any. And the glorious circumstance which makes it to be so is this—that it was not a certain amount of wrath, suffering, or punishment—however theology may sometimes have imagined—that our Redeemer underwent; but it was, as Scripture ever declares, His own life—that indivisible, and infinitely precious treasure which He gave up, as the one means of ransoming a world that was *lost*.

And here, going back to the natural case, we may suppose that none but my own brothers have accepted the ransom, and that from the first I expected it to be so—would it be out of order to say that I loved my brothers, and sacrificed the treasure for them—while yet I gave it up as a ransom for all? And how is it less in order, if only it be true, to say that “Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it,”—while, at the same time, “He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time”?

An illustration of a directly scriptural sort will not be amiss. Here, then, is the Paschal lamb slain for the benefit of one family, or, if that be too small, for it and the neighbouring one. Thus the blood of that one lamb is sufficient for the redemption of two first-born sons. What if one of the fathers applies it to his doorpost, and the other not! It will simply follow that one son is spared, and the other slain. The blood which was sufficient for both becomes effectual for the faithful one. And, as there was no deficiency, neither is there any extravagance in it. For the understanding always was that it was not the blood as shed, but the shed blood as sprinkled, which really saved.

So there is the great day of atonement when, first, by the blood of the sin-offering, the priest “makes atonement for himself, and his household, and for all the congregation of Israel”—and, after that, “lays both his hands upon the head of the live goat, confessing over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and then sending him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.” (Lev. xvi. 21.) Thus is there made the very utmost that could be de-

vised of a ceremonial atonement for the people—first by the sacrifice of a victim adequate to the case, and then by laying all their sins on the head of another victim, for the more complete and palpable removal of them. It is one act gone through for all, without the least regard to the number of sinners or sins involved. The same thing would have been wanted for a thousand, and equally sufficed for a million; for such is the understanding, that each Israelite shall look on the one goat as slain, and on the other as sent away, *for himself*—just as it was with the serpent on the pole. And so, on the other hand, should any one contemptuously reject the benefit thus provided, then assuredly he shall suffer in some way for those offences which he refuses to have expiated—while yet his ill behaviour can in no way alter the fact that, by the blood of the one victim, an atonement was made for him, and on the head of the other his sins were laid. It is hardly possible to conceive a clearer case; and we could have no better illustration of the principle in question than this divinely appointed type of the great redemption. For, on the one hand, we find that “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;” and, on the other hand, we are told, “*By His knowledge shall my servant, the righteous One, justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.*” (Isaiah liii.) Thus on the cross mankind was represented;—thus was there undergone for all a death which meant that for all an ample atonement had been made; and in this sense, the only sense that such language can have, “The iniquity of us all was laid upon Him.” But thus also it equally appears that, if we would share in the atoning virtue of that cross, we must “*know Him whom to know is life eternal.*” With-

out this we are unransomed, just like those captives who prefer bondage to liberty, when the jewel is delivered up on behalf of all; or those first-born for whom the blood, though shed, was not sprinkled; or those serpent-bitten who refused to turn their eyes towards the pole. Nor is there any possible room for imputing waste or excess to the offering in the one case more than in the other. Less than the ransoming life of the Son of man had been insufficient for the smallest amount of redemption. But now that one life is adequate for the redemption of the world.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

I MUST now, in closing, say a few words to whoever will listen of those who repudiate the doctrines just advanced—in favour, as they consider, of a more genial view of redemption, as well as the universal reconciliation, sooner or later, of the human family to God.

Now, in regard to the latter of these points, you are well aware how you regard our view. You know how apt you are at once to meet and to dismiss with a shudder the very idea of destruction—turning away with aversion as from some very ghastly spectacle. And yet this truth—if it be such—involves so much besides, and lies so deep in the whole relation of man to God, that I cannot help asking you to reconsider the matter—in the hope that right judgment may yet correct wrong feeling, and show you that an actual *end* of sin and sinners is neither unrighteous to man nor unworthy of God. I know what you are in the habit of saying for the belief in a universal immortality. And yet what does it all amount to? An earnest philosophy may argue for it; while your tenderest sentiments may breathe assent, and steal away your conviction. But what *light* have you thus obtained? What *authority* has assured you that men as such—

notwithstanding sin—are immortal? Go back and re-examine your philosophy; take courage and weigh your sentiments; beware of assumptions without any real basis—to say nothing of slavery to fashionable opinions and boasted liberty;—and then perhaps, with your ears really opened, you may after all hear ‘reason’ say—‘It is not in me’—while ‘sentiment’ may sigh, and exclaim, ‘alas! it was a dream.’ And yet why ‘alas’? Unless you are very sure of ‘restoration,’ you should welcome ‘destruction’ as a judgment precluding the infinite horror of an immortality in sin. And can you be sure of ‘restoration’? Is it really the true teaching of God’s word, or only the fond imagination of man—lightly or laboriously spun out of, or bound up with, some stray sentence in the Bible which has nothing to do with the subject? And is it not after all because you wish it to be so—because you think it should be so—because you have a feeling in you that it is so—a feeling which you count to be, after a sort, inspired and divine—is it not on such grounds that you entertain the *belief*? But what, then, is the use of a revelation from above, if we have such reliable information from within? And above all, what can be the value of a revelation which so directly contradicts information so certain? Does the Bible teach the ‘destruction’ of sin and sinners or not? If it does not, then by all means reject it; but consider well what, in that case, it does teach. If it be quite clear to you that—denying ‘destruction’ altogether—it teaches a universal immortality, then look well, I pray you, for the intimation of a universal blessedness in connection with the immortality. But if, on the other hand, the Bible does teach such ‘destruction,’ then you will not wonder if I tremble for you

in your disbelief of it. For then you as sinners have become liable to that very thing—and you, if unsaved, have nothing brighter to look for than the dark reality. God's will, not yours, must stand—God's word, not *his* who said, "Ye shall not surely die." And then it will be a long wonder to yourself how you could ever infer the universal and endless sonship of *men* from such words as "We are His offspring;" or yet from that sweet word "Our Father," as taught to His *disciples* by One whose very mission it was to "*give*" the sonship "*to as many as receive Him.*" Our Lord Himself, in short, if words are an index to thought, neither understood that an endless life was a natural endowment of man, nor that He had come as the supernatural Dispenser of it. And therefore I solemnly ask you to consider whether your great confidence on this subject is anything better than a determination—in spite of everything like evidence—to have no other God and no other Christianity—still resting here, that it *ought to be* so—*must be* so—and *is* so. After all that I have seen and heard about your belief, I can find no other account of it. For my own part, I am obliged to begin where you end; and to say that the endless life of the saved, and the "everlasting destruction" of the unsaved, *is* the doctrine of God's word, and must therefore be the truth.

So far, in regard to that very important point which I know arouses in you so much aversion and difficulty.

And this leads me to the main point on which I would speak with you—the Atonement itself, as already set forth. Only I would anxiously avoid mixing up

with the simple scriptural truth any language of mine, or any theological theory at all. And therefore, if you particularly dislike the expression, 'Satisfaction to justice'—or 'bearing of penalty'—I beg you to forget all such for the present, and let us confine ourselves to the more elementary and tangible view of a real substitution, or life-for-life ransom, as indicated in the various ways already pointed out. But, before saying a word in regard to your belief, I must be allowed to express a real sympathy with you in a certain objection to our doctrine which may have weighed much with you, as it has done with many. For I feel, as deeply as you can do, what a tremendous difficulty in the way of the ordinary belief has been raised by the dogma of endless torments. No wonder if such a terrible mistake has powerfully reacted against all the truths supposed to be bound up with it—obliging many to seek for a more benevolent view of the divine administration. And no wonder if, thus set adrift, they have found themselves amid treacherous shoals and currents, instead of in that sure harbour which had been so cruelly bereft of its lights. Again, the same dogma has given a false view of *death*—making it to consist in a bad and wretched state of existence or life—thus paving the way for the view of its being nothing more than a certain inward experience. And death being thus regarded as simply the continuous attendant upon continuous sin—the door is at once opened for the view that, the sin ceasing, the death must cease also. From all which it follows that a thick cloud has been raised over the great truth of substitution, as expressing simply the ransom of lives that were justly forfeited by the gracious surrender of one life of super-eminent value.

The ground being thus far cleared of its most serious obstructions, let us see how the case stands in regard to atonement—such as has now been argued for. And here let me do all the justice I can to your views and reasons—while I seek to win you from what, I believe, is the false to the true.

Now here is something of the way in which you are in the habit of regarding the matter. One friend (you say) having injured another, comes and pleads—‘I know I have offended you; but do forgive me, do not be angry with me, and I will never do so again;’ upon which the whole matter is settled and ended. Very true (I answer), but there is no law in such a case. Or (you continue) a son, after all manner of wandering and offence, returns to his home, saying, ‘Father, I have shamefully transgressed; the thought of it cuts me through; but forgive me this time; do not punish me, though I know I deserve it; but try to forget the offence, and you will see what a son I will henceforth be to you.’ ‘Oh, my son!’ (says the father), ‘why speak of punishment now? Surely you have punished both yourself and me enough already. Forgive? forget? of course I do. Displeased? punish?—impossible. And now, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.”’ Again, I answer—There is *no law* in all this. ‘No law?’ you say, ‘why there is surely the law of love; is not that the highest and most sacred of all law? Is not God love? Is He not infinitely more compassionate, and ready to welcome us, than we can ever be to welcome *ours*? Talk of compensation, indeed! And what compensation does the father want on that day, other than he actually gets from his penitent wanderer? Or substitution! The idea is abhorrent

to every feeling of the heart—the thing is an impossibility.’

Now all this is very beautiful; or rather would be so, if only it were true. But it is not the view that God's word gives of God. For that little sentence or clause, and that parable, of which so much is made, are really only parts of a whole; and cannot mean anything really different from the whole itself. As to some of the features, indeed, which mark the two cases, the human and the divine, there is, in regard to feeling and result, a very important analogy. As to the position of the parties, and the procedure in the matter of acceptance the difference is just as marked. That imaginary father, I repeat, never was a lawgiver. His authority at the most is only a delegated thing, to be exercised by him as the subject of Another—he himself all the time being only the fellow-creature and fellow-subject of his own son. Such authority, in fact, is only a stewardship, not a lordship;—a trust for the benefit of a minor, not a dominion for the exalting of the holder. Such a difference in position will surely make a difference in practice, when the question comes to be as to the fitting attitude towards a returning prodigal—of the earthly father, on the one hand, and of the heavenly on the other.

This is one difference; here is another. That earthly father being no lord, judge, or magistrate, has never had to take one judicial step, or utter one word of a judicial kind, against his erring child. He has never had the prodigal to his bar, so as to pronounce in his hearing the word ‘banishment,’ or ‘death.’ The heavenly Father has actually declared “the whole world to be guilty before Him”—has adjudged every sinner to the

death which is sin's wages. So far each has been acting in character, according to his proper nature—whether as that of a mortal man, or of the almighty, everlasting Lord. Will it be strange if these differences in regard to authority and judgment should lead to a corresponding difference in regard to reconciliation and acceptance? Hence, one difference more. That earthly father never had to give a ransom for the forfeited life of a sentenced son—never had to harmonize a decision which said, 'Thou shalt die' with a heart which 'desired not his death'—never gave up an elder son that he might save the younger. The heavenly Father has done all this—or rather something which is but faintly suggested by such ideas—something (be it what it may) in consequence of which "He may be just, even when justifying him that believeth."

Are we to suppose, then, that law makes God less amiable, less loving? On the contrary—law, justice, penalty, only make way for a manifestation of love such as on no other ground would have been conceivable. The earthly father *loves* his obedient—or, which is still better, his disobedient child. The heavenly Father *is* LOVE. And the ransom-price which He spared not, but gave up when wanted for our redemption, is the witness to that most glorious and precious of all truths.

And now this is precisely the thing—this arrangement of justice—this donation of love—which you cannot accept of. You have often heard or read the evidence for the belief—and it has sometimes perhaps been hard to put aside what the Scripture so very amply and variously teaches in regard to it. Still, your objection to the view is immovable—it cannot be—it shall

not be—it is not so. And thus, respecting as you do Christ and the Bible, you are compelled to seek after some other explanation of the Christian Sacrifice. What that explanation, under some one or other of its many forms, is need not now be repeated. It is with the spirit in which it is offered that we have to do. And that spirit—what can it be but one of resistance to the true grace of God? Believe me, I deeply feel how little right I, or any one, has to judge you in this matter. My only wish is to assist you, if I can, in judging yourself. I know that you have the same right that I have to satisfy yourself as to the teaching of the Scriptures. But this is no secondary concern in which one may quietly leave another to go his own road. It is a vital matter, if such can be. God has arranged, executed, and revealed one thing or the other on the field of redemption. If you be right in your view of that redemption, then of course we are wrong, and are greatly dishonouring God by the grievous mistake which we have accepted and are spreading in the place of His truth. And you certainly have not been slack in the attempt to show us our error. Still, if our hearts are sincere, and our lives pure, we have not missed the way of life, as you yourselves will allow. But if, on the other hand, redemption be the thing which we hold that it is—if God has given up His Son to bear the judgment for our sins as we were bound to have borne it—to die for us in such a sense that we ourselves should not die but live—if this, I say, be the Christian redemption, and you positively refuse to hear of it—then what is that but to resist God, and refuse His salvation? It is of no use to plead that we believe in Christ as saving us from the power of our own godless will by the greater

power of His godly self-sacrifice—and that thus we obtain reconciliation to God. For if all the while God has put Christ before us—not casually, but constantly, and under every variety of form and expression—as a sin-bearing Substitute—if He has taught us that thus and thus only He reconciles us to Himself—if, in a word, He has represented this as the ground of His entire salvation—and if, on our part, we positively and determinedly refuse to receive such a Christ—then what is this but actually *refusing the salvation of God*? That which, in such a case, we do receive is our own belief, not God's salvation—and God's real salvation we reject as unworthy of Him and unfit for us. Say, then, is the difference small? Is the danger light? The whole question is confessedly one regarding WHAT GOD is as LAWGIVER, JUDGE, REDEEMER;—and *if*, on the one hand, He has plainly revealed Himself, *as we plead that He has*—and you, on the other hand, say that you will not have it so—what, I ask you, as solemnly as one human being may ask another—what is this but “to fight against God”? What is it but to declare that you will not have *such a Lawgiver—such a Judge—such a Redeemer—such a GOD*? It is no question this about system, opinion, tradition; nor yet of what we may call *faith*, even under what may seem to us its very highest aspect. The one question is—What has God declared and revealed Himself to be? What means that manifestation which we have of Him in Christ? It is certainly a very plausible, and may seem a noble view, that the assumption of human nature by the all-creating Word can amount to nothing less than the actual presenting as an acceptable sacrifice to God of every partaker of that nature, together with the even-

tual restoration of all. But what if, with all the grandeur of the conception, it turn out, when weighed in God's balances, to be but a gorgeous romance, and a melancholy delusion! For, after all, the question remains—What is the divinely revealed meaning and object of the great arrangement? If the answer be, To make us holy—then we say, Beyond all doubt—even holy as He is holy, and blessed as He is blessed. But *how*? May not God be allowed His own means as well as His own ends? May He not reveal Himself in the one as really as in the other? May He not appoint the way of reconciliation and access as certainly as the object? And may it not be as truly a part, not of our duty only, but of our very salvation, to accept God's *method* as to harmonize with His object? It is no mere 'plan of salvation' that you are asked to approve of;—it is no bare doctrine that you are asked to subscribe to;—it is Christ the Saviour that you are entreated to 'receive' as "giving His life a ransom in the stead of many;"—it is the Eternal God that you are commanded to submit to—as "justifying the ungodly;" as "reconciling men to Himself," by "not imputing to them their trespasses;"—and this, *because* "HE HATH MADE HIM TO BE SIN FOR US WHO KNEW NO SIN, THAT WE MIGHT BE MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM."

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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